CLIMATE DENIALISM KILLS | **LIBERTARIANISM'S SOUTHERN ROOTS**

MARK HERTSGAARD | KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

THE Nation.

THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

It's illegal to run schools designed to keep out black students. But the Justice Department is letting districts do just that.

By Emmanuel Felton

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Letters

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Labour Pains

In "Britain's Midsummer Fever Dream" [Aug. 14/21], John Harris draws a very imperfect picture for *Nation* readers of what is happening in the United Kingdom. His claim that "the way [Jeremy] Corbyn went from zero to hero in a matter of weeks looks like further proof of how politics flips around in the topsy-turvy reality in which we find ourselves" ignores the years of grassroots campaigning that made Corbyn a real challenger for prime minister, on a genuine program of social reform.

Corbyn and his supporters built a grassroots machine by winning the leadership of the Labour Party not once but twice: He was elected Labour's leader in 2015 and then re-elected when the attempts by "moderate" Labour MPs to unseat him were rebuffed by the grassroots a year later. In these leadership campaigns, Corbyn's supporters recruited hundreds of thousands of new members to the Labour Party and built a campaign machine that mixed traditional methods—rallies and massive outdoor meetings—with imaginative digital campaigning, all promoting solid socialist policies like raising the minimum wage and building more public housing.

In the election, this same campaign strategy was able to take away Prime Minister Theresa May's majority, despite a vicious, smear-filled personal campaign against Corbyn. Mass canvassing by a newly enthused membership and the production of free web films outclassed the Conservative campaign, which was based around paid-for "negative" Facebook advertising and a virulently right-wing press. It's a simple lesson: If you want to try to change things, you need to campaign from the bottom up.

But Harris thinks it's just an unpredictable set of "pictures in variable sequence, images with no 'meaning,'" because he joined in these attacks on Corbyn. This March, just two months before the election, Harris published a column attacking Corbyn under the headline "Can anyone rescue Labour from this deep irrelevance?," in which he accused Corbyn's Labour of being a "pantomime" and asserted that it was "blindingly obvious" Corbyn should resign.

There are no guarantees in this world, but there is a real possibility that a Corbyn-led Labour Party could win the next general election by building on this campaigning with the kind of social-reform politics we haven't seen for decades. Harris is having trouble predicting the future, but Corbyn's supporters are trying to change it.

Solomon Hughes
Southampton, U.K.

John Harris Replies

The fact that Jeremy Corbyn's leadership is backed by thousands of activists and a formidable campaign machine is beyond doubt. That he and his allies held their nerve is to their credit. But that doesn't detract from two things that the euphoria of this summer has rather smoothed over: the frequent fragility of Labour's position over the last two years, and the sense of a political project that acquired its strength suddenly and unexpectedly.

There were indeed "years of grassroots campaigning" by the Labour left, but once it had taken command of the party, it was met at first with large-scale public indifference. For a long time, Labour was unable to push its poll rating beyond 30 percent. It lost hundreds of seats on local British councils, and Corbyn's personal ratings were dire: There was indeed a deep danger of political irrelevance, and even many of his most passionate supporters began to

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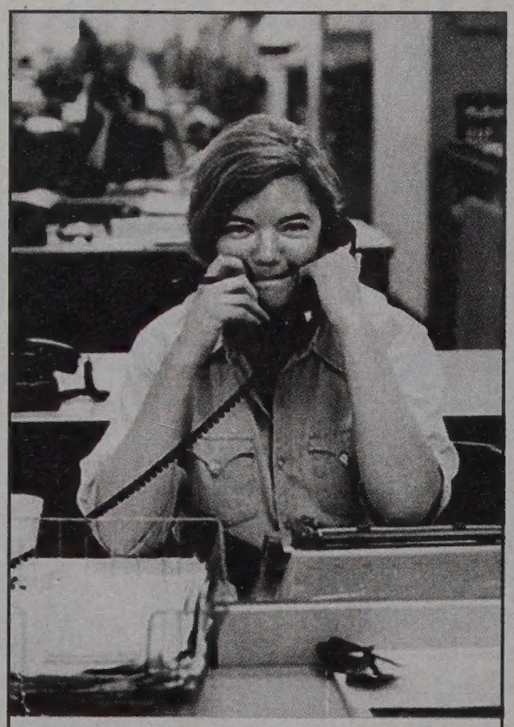

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Climate Denialism Kills

The horrors hurled at Houston and the Himalayan lowlands in late August were heartbreaking—but also infuriating. How many times must we see this disaster movie—titled Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Hurricane Sandy in 2012, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, along with many lesser-known foreign releases—before we intervene and change the ending? And how long before we hold the ultimate authors of such climate catastrophes accountable for the miseries they inflict?

The tragedy of Harvey starts with the suffering of innocents like Jordyn Grace, the 3-year-old who survived the flood by clinging to the body of her drowned mother, who had prayed with her last breaths. At least 60 people died in Texas because of the storm, over 1 million people were displaced, and who knows how many survived but lost everything? Multiply the death and destruction in Texas a hundredfold to comprehend the scale of devastation in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, where—although the news coverage has been a fraction of Harvey's—a staggering 16 million children "are in urgent need of life-saving support" after "torrential monsoon rains and catastrophic flooding," UNICEF reports.

What makes this so infuriating is that it shouldn't be happening. Experts have warned for decades that global warming would increase these sorts of weather extremes and that people would suffer and die if protective measures were not implemented. In 2008, John Podesta, soon to be Obama's transition director, organized a war game to test the responses to projected climate disruptions. Eerily enough, the scenario chosen—and vetted as scientifically accurate by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory—envisioned a Category 4 hurricane striking Houston and extreme monsoons flooding India. This is not to say that global warming "caused" Harvey—a scientifically illiterate framing of the issue—but it did make the rains bigger, more intense, and more destructive. Harvey dumped 27 trillion gallons of water—"enough to cover all of Manhattan a mile deep," noted Seth Borenstein of the Associated Press—and as much as 30 percent of it can be attributed to global warming, according to Kevin Trenberth, a senior scientist with the National Center for Atmospheric Research.

Many other experts have issued warnings, starting with NASA scientist James Hansen's landmark 1988 Senate testimony that global warming had begun and, if left unchecked, would threaten the future of human civilization. Recent years have also brought abundant evidence that shifting to wind power, less meat-heavy diets, and other climate-friendly alternatives would result in lasting economic and health benefits: more jobs, less inequality, cleaner air, stronger communities.

Yet Donald Trump and other powerful know-nothings in Washington seem perversely determined to ignore the lessons of Harvey, while doubling down on making things worse. Trump has crammed his administration full of climate-change deniers while pushing full steam ahead on more oil, gas, and coal production. His EPA chief, incredibly, has urged governors to ignore the Clean Power Plan proposed by the Obama administration, aiding conservative efforts to gut the policy. Days before Harvey drenched Texas, Trump rescinded Obama's requirement that federal agencies take climate impacts into account before approving major infrastructure. And in a stunning insult not only to climate preparedness but the legacy of US space exploration, Trump nominated a climate denier with no scientific training to run NASA.

When the president announced in June that he was withdrawing the United States from the Paris climate accord, I wrote in *The Nation*: "To refuse to act against global warming is to condemn thousands of people to death and suffering today and millions more tomorrow. This is murder, even if Trump's willful ignorance of climate science prevents him from seeing it." That judgment grows more apt with each passing day we don't reverse course. Knowing what we know in 2017, expanding fossil-fuel production is

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Cover illustration by Zoë Halpern.

DC BY THE NUMBERS

$7.8T

Amount in federal revenue lost over the next decade under Trump's proposed tax plan, according to the Tax Policy Center

42.3%

Corporations with at least $10 million in assets that paid no federal income tax in 2012, according to the Government Accountability Office

$2.5T

Estimated value of untaxed cash held overseas by US companies—equivalent to almost 14 percent of the country's GDP, according to CNBC

$175K

Average annual tax cut for the top 1 percent of taxpayers if Trump's plan is enacted, according to the Tax Policy Center

—Miguel Salazar

"I try to pay as little tax as possible."

Donald Trump, on the campaign trail, August 2015

like Big Tobacco continuing to addict people to its cancer sticks: technically legal but, in effect, premeditated murder.

It is past time to call out Trump and all climate deniers for this crime against humanity. No more treating climate denial like an honest difference of opinion. When top tobacco executives swore to Congress that nicotine wasn't addictive, their assertion, though laughable, did not make it true. Forty-six state attorneys general forced those companies to pay at least $206 billion for their wickedness. Now, the individuals and institutions pushing climate denial must be called out with even greater vigor: in newspaper columns, on TV and radio talk shows, in town halls, at the ballot box, and by consumer boycotts, legal investigations, shareholder resolutions, street protests, and more.

Shedding tears for little Jordyn Grace in Houston and her counterparts in the Himalayan lowlands is only right, but it is far from sufficient. With Hurricane Irma churning toward Florida, the horrors and heartbreaks will only get worse until we change the game for their perpetrators. The first step toward justice is to call things by their true names. Murder is murder, whether the murderers admit it or not. Punish it as such, or we encourage more of the same. MARK HERTSGAARD

The GOP Tax Scam

It's highway robbery, disguised as "reform."

COMMENT

Having failed in their attempts to strip millions of people of their health insurance by repealing Obamacare, President Trump and the GOP Congress are moving on to their biggest priority: tax cuts for corporations and the rich. The plan is still being written, but Trump has already begun his push for it. And every part of the administration's tax pitch is divorced from reality (a gentle way of saying it's a lie and a fraud).

For example, their stated rationale for cutting corporate taxes is laughable. Republicans complain that US companies pay the highest tax rates in the world. If corporations had more cash on hand, they assert, they would invest that money and create jobs. Trump adds that lower taxes will convince companies to stop moving jobs abroad and start building things in the United States.

This is nonsense. For one thing, American corporations don't pay the highest tax rates in the world. While the nominal top rate is 35 percent, the Government Accountability Office found that profitable large corporations paid, on average, an effective rate of just 14 percent from 2008 to 2012. The tax code is rigged to ensure that result: Federal revenue from corporate taxes has plummeted, from about 3.7 percent of GDP in the late 1960s to an average of 1.5 percent in recent years. Meanwhile, profits hit record highs last year, with the S&P 500 devoting a large percentage of those earnings to buying back stocks, paying dividends, and gobbling up their competitors. These companies are boosting their own stock prices and executive bonuses, not investing in job creation or long-term growth.

So corporations aren't short on cash, and they won't use tax breaks for new investments. Nor are they shipping jobs abroad because of the domestic tax burden; they are doing so to take advantage of cheap labor and weak environmental and consumer protections in other countries. Many use transfer pricing and a range of accounting tricks to dodge taxes by reporting profits abroad. Trump argues that we should allow them to bring that money home at a very low rate—but if the companies get it, their tax scam will have worked. They will use the money—as they did the last time the government allowed repatriation—primarily to buy back stocks, boost dividends, and pump up executive pay. And then even more companies will insist on repeating the scam in the future.

To test the GOP's argument that lower tax rates create jobs, the Institute for Policy Studies looked at the record of profitable companies that paid a tax rate of 20 percent or less from 2008 through 2015. Those businesses were actually net *losers* of jobs.

Even Trump's stated goal—revenue-neutral tax reform—is a scam. Republicans are interested in lowering tax rates on corporations and the rich; they are far less interested in closing loopholes to pay for those lower rates. This isn't a strategy for reform; it's a full-employment program for corporate lobbyists. Every loophole and tax dodge has a deep-pocketed special interest mobilizing to defend it. Republican candidates may benefit from the bidding war that ensues, but the public surely will not.

Even the bill-making process is perverse. Trump claims that he wants Democratic support, but there have been no discussions with Democrats toward drafting a bipartisan measure. Instead, it's being cooked up by a small group of Republicans behind closed doors. Democrats will be invited to sign on or shut up. The plan is to pass the bill as part of a budget-reconciliation process that needs only GOP votes to pass.

This is the epitome of modern conservative governance. Trump and the Republicans want to slash spending and reduce the capacity of the government to serve the majority. By passing a tax scheme that does nothing to address the real challenges we face, they will contribute to their actual goal: discrediting government as an instrument of national purpose. It's a decades-old plan, one made famous by Ronald Reagan when he asserted that the most terrifying words in the English language are "I'm from the government and I'm here to help."

There are sensible tax reforms: Raise rates on the rich and use that money to rebuild infrastructure and accelerate the move to renewable energy. That would create jobs, reduce inequality, stimulate research and new technology, help capture growing global markets, and begin to address climate change. We should also tax income from investments at the same rate as income from work, and require global corporations to pay taxes at the same rates as domestic companies by ending deferral. And we should tax financial speculation to raise revenue and at least slow the destabilizing effects of casino capitalism. But it won't surprise you to hear that these and other common-sense ideas are not being discussed by Republicans.

To echo Ronald Reagan, there are few words in the English language more terrifying than "A Republican president and Congress have announced that it's time for tax reform." KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL

Asking for a Friend

Liza Featherstone

Party Rules

Dear Liza,

I'm a 32-year-old woman who would like to have kids and a life partner in the not-so-distant future. And lucky me! I've recently started dating an excellent candidate. But I can't even pretend to think it's possible (or desirable) to have sex with just one person for the rest of my life or even, frankly, for a few years.

Monogamy feels antithetical to the type of feminism and anticapitalism I subscribe to. I am repulsed by the idea of being a man's property. Also, monogamy—like capitalism—requires us to believe in a false scarcity: that we have to struggle for every little bit and that everything we gain comes at someone else's expense. The kind of liberatory future I'd like to see is one of abundance and generosity and sharing. One of the few places we can experiment with that now is in our love lives.

But ALL the decent men I've dated are really opposed to open relationships, while the men I've slept with who say they fancy the idea don't ever stick around long enough for the "relationship" part of an open relationship.

This leaves me feeling like once I find a partner, the options are: 1) cheating (crummy and unethical, also a big anxiety-inducing headache); 2) waiting for the mythical "one" who will magically make me never attracted to anyone else (I'm fairly certain this is a hoax); or 3) retire from my glorious days as a loud, proud slut and gradually wither away inside as I suffocate one of the parts of my life, personality, and politics I cherish most. Please tell me there is another option out there.

—A Marxist-Feminist Slut

Dear Slut,

Yes, there are better options! Treat this as you would any other major difference you have before settling down: patiently and by tolerating some contingencies. If you wanted to live on the noisiest corner in Bushwick and your partner was happiest in rural Tennessee, you might take turns living in each other's preferred locale, finding unexpected delights there. Experiment with a period of monogamy—remember, many people are most jealousy-prone early in a relationship—on the condition that he agrees to consider other arrangements in the future. Or perhaps some adventures are more acceptable to him than others. (Group sex only? Dalliances that take place out of town? No exes or class enemies?) If so, are you open to such compromises? And please attend closely to the tone of these conversations—you need to be able to discuss your desires with him without being made to feel immoral, disgusting, or greedy. If such talks give you hope, hang in there! If not, he might not be your future baby daddy.

Which would be so sad! But there are men who want exactly what you want. You might have to approach finding them in a deliberate way, which can feel unromantic. Your OkCupid profile should state clearly that you are seeking open relationships only, and that you are looking for a long-term "primary" partner—no hookups. (Those last two words are painful for a slut to type, but if you don't, you're just going to continue hosting delightful libertines with no interest in making a domestic life with you.) A good friend of mine, annoyed by the very problem you name (men into open relationships without the relationship part), recently tried this, with excellent results. Also, find your local poly and open-love communities and attend their social events, where many men are seeking someone just like you. Given your politi-

(continued on page 8)

Questions? Ask Liza at TheNation.com/article/asking-for-a-friend

PHOTO: BRENNAN CAVANAUGH

ILLUSTRATED BY **JOANNA NEBORSKY**

THE RESISTANCE

Brakes and Roses

What's the best way to spread the tenets of democratic socialism? By fixing broken taillights, according to one local chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America. Stating the need to reduce police stops of drivers of color, including undocumented immigrants, New Orleans DSA members recently hosted the first of two events to repair broken taillights—a commonly cited reason for police stops. (It's allegedly why the police in Minnesota pulled Philando Castile over before an officer fatally shot him last year.)

The first event, which was held on August 26, saw 50 taillights being changed, and the second event (which will be held in mid-September) could see many more free repairs. One New Orleans DSA councilmember told *Vice* that the party plans to take the community service nationwide. As DSA membership skyrockets, this "brake-light socialism" could result in even more interest in the party of roses.

—Elizabeth Adetiba

Eric Alterman

The *Real* Big Lie

D'Souza's Soros slander reveals the anti-Semitism at the heart of the far right.

On August 31, convicted felon and right-wing provocateur Dinesh D'Souza tweeted that he thought it would be "interesting to see" the liberal financier and philanthropist George Soros "extradited to Israel & tried for his complicity in Nazi atrocities against Jews."

As he hawks his most recent book, *The Big Lie*—ironically, a near-perfect description of its contents, which claim to reveal the Nazi roots of the American left—D'Souza has tweeted countless versions of this particular big lie. With childish faux cleverness, he refers to Soros as "Hitler's collection boy" and claims that Soros "literally worked for Hitler." Right-wing talk-radio shows, websites, and even a Republican gubernatorial candidate from Pennsylvania have parroted lines from his anti-Soros campaign.

D'Souza told a right-wing talk-show host that he was "delighted to uncover" Soros's history. But, as with almost every alleged discovery made by pro-Trump partisans, it is not only factually false and morally reprehensible; it is also old news. The charge has already been made by such far-right luminaries as Glenn Beck, David Horowitz, Ann Coulter, Alex Jones, and Tony Blankley (who retracted it after I asked him to back it up). Perhaps most shamefully of all, former *New Republic* owner and editor Marty Peretz smeared Soros, calling him "a young cog in the Hitlerite wheel."

The microscopic kernel of truth in the accusation lies in the fact that Soros survived the Holocaust as a 14-year-old child in Budapest because he was hidden by a Ministry of Agriculture official who had a Jewish wife. Soros's father, Tivadar Soros, helped protect her, and in return the official agreed to let George pretend to be his Christian godson. On one occasion, rather than be left alone in Budapest for three days, the young teen accompanied the official, who was sent to inventory the estate of a Jewish family that had fled the country. That's it. The details of this episode are readily available and were covered in Michael Kaufman's 2002 book *Soros: The Life and Times of a Messianic Billionaire*. (I have also written about it in the past.)

The Soros slander appears to derive from a bizarre *60 Minutes* interview conducted by Steve Kroft nearly 20 years ago. In his introduction, Kroft intoned: "While hundreds of thousands of Jews were being shipped off to the death camps, George Soros accompanied his phony godfather on his appointed rounds, confiscating property from the Jews." The accompanying footage showed masses of Hungarian Jews being led away at gunpoint as Kroft spoke. Then he turned to Soros accusingly: "My understanding is you went out with this protector of yours, who swore you were his adopted godson…went out, in fact, and helped in the confiscation of property from Jews." Clearly flummoxed by the moral and intellectual imbecility of the inquiry, Soros offered a stumbling response that failed to clarify the truth.

Soros, as is well-known, is a billionaire banker and major funder of liberal causes. As such, he represents a near-perfect target for anti-Semites seeking to purvey the same sort of poison that has historically characterized propaganda like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The fact that anti-Semitism has become a key element in exciting the passions of "populist" conservatives both here and abroad explains why so many far-right figures are willing to embrace it, regardless of the degree to which it stirs sleeping hatreds and imperils vulnerable Jewish communities. The most worrisome recent manifestation comes from the Hungarian government, which launched a poster campaign featuring a photograph of a smiling Soros with the warning "Don't let Soros have the last laugh" beneath the words: 99 PERCENT REJECT ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION.

Anti-Semitism has become a key element in exciting the passions of "populist" conservatives here and abroad.

Aware of Hungary's history in the Holocaust and the fears of its remaining Jewish community, the Israeli ambassador, Yossi Amrani, complained to Prime Minister Viktor Orbán: "The campaign not only evokes sad memories but also sows hatred and fear…. It's our moral responsibility to raise a voice and call on the relevant authorities to exert their power and put an

LEFT FROM TOP: CHRISTOPHER PETERS, SCOTT TOMFORD (BOTH COURTESY OF NEW ORLEANS DSA TWITTER); ILLUSTRATION: ANDY FRIEDMAN

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WITH BILL MILLER

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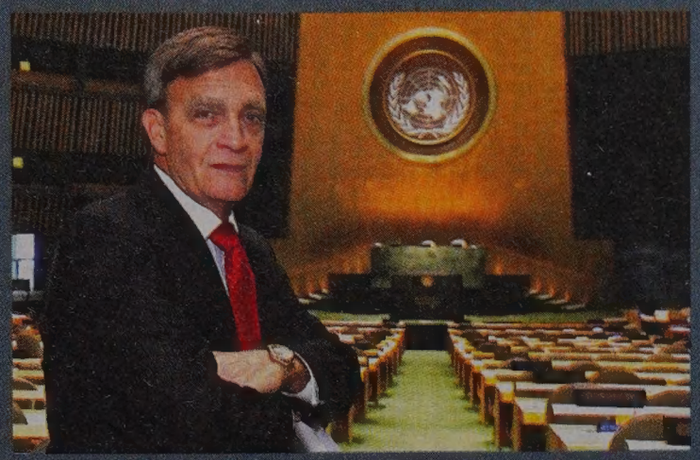

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He is the Principal of Miller and Associates International Media Consultants, which created the Global Connection Television concept.

Bill developed an interest in international issues and the UN when he served as a US Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic. In his first year he worked as a community developer in a remote rural area; his second year he was Professor of Social Work at the Madre y Maestra University in Santiago, the country's second largest city.

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Soros is a critic of Israeli policies, so the government that claims to represent the Jewish people excused an anti-Semitic campaign against him.

end to this cycle." Incredibly, Amrani's own government implicitly rebuked him by having his statement "clarified." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had a visit to Hungary scheduled, and he shares with Orbán—and, of course, with Donald Trump—a commitment to xenophobic fearmongering as a means of shunting aside accusations of corruption, dishonesty, and dysfunction. The Israeli Foreign Ministry immediately issued a statement accusing Soros of "continuously undermining Israel's democratically elected governments" by funding organizations "that defame the Jewish state and seek to deny it the right to defend itself." Thus, because Soros is a critic of Israeli policies, the government that claims to represent the Jewish people excused an anti-Semitic campaign against a Holocaust refugee conducted by the leader of a nation that participated in the Holocaust. Let that one sink in for a minute.

As with almost everything in American politics today, the charges against Soros are not really about Soros, much less what a 14-year-old boy did on one day during the German occupation of Hungary. D'Souza thinks that "former Nazi collaborator George Soros should be investigated as a sponsor of domestic terrorism" for his alleged sponsorship of antifa. Neither Soros nor his foundations support antifa in any way, but never mind that: At last count, more than 138,000 idiots had signed a petition at whitehouse.gov demanding that President Trump "declare George Soros a terrorist and seize all of his related organizations' assets under RICO and NDAA law." Incredibly, this is where our politics has taken us in 2017, a time when the murderous madness that seized so much of Europe in the 1930s and '40s appears to be repeating itself—farcically, perhaps, but dangerously nevertheless. ■

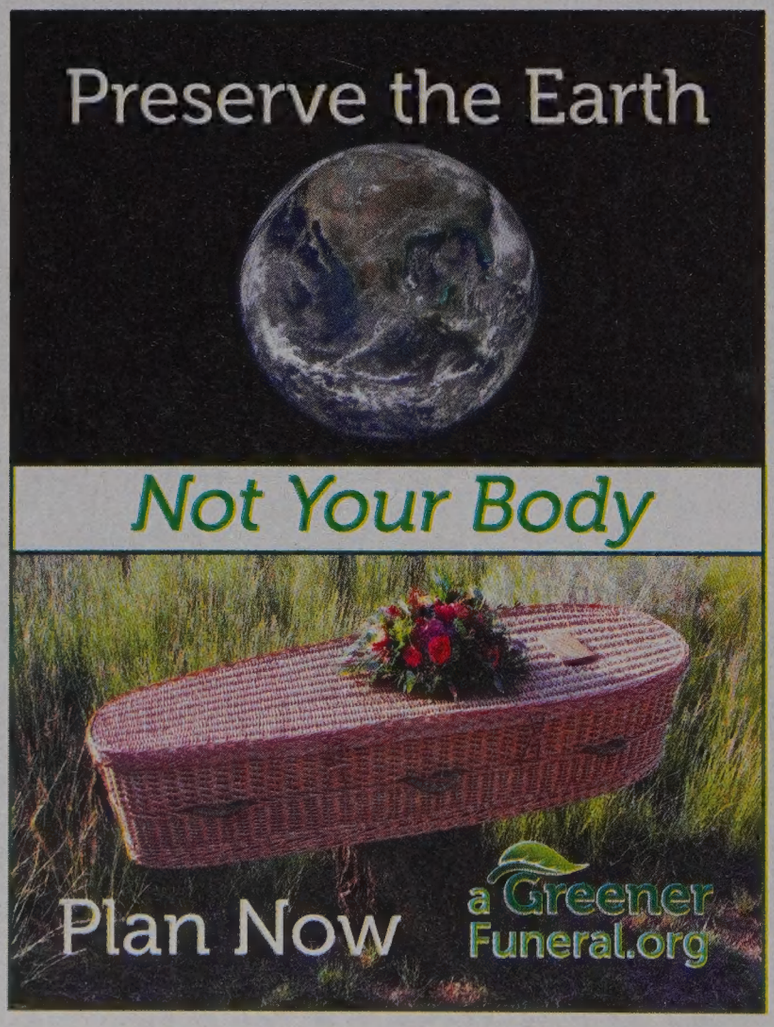
(continued from page 5)

cal thinking, I'd love to suggest that starting an Engels reading group will bring the right boys to the yard, but alas, we know better: Radicals can be conservative in their personal lives.

Dear Liza,

I live in a small city with a tight-knit activist community. I would like some advice on how to handle one person who frequently badmouths others in our community for not doing politics her way. Often, I think the criticism is baseless, and it is hurtful to the person she's disparaging. In a larger city, I would avoid her, but that's impossible here. Is there any way to address this problem?

—Tired of Listening



Asking for a Friend

Dear Listening,

Complaining about others isn't always a bad way to bond with fellow malcontents. As David Sedaris once wrote of a stranger in the airport, "If she was just being petty and judgmental, we could go on all day, perhaps form a friendship." But your interlocutor has misread the situation: You don't want to be her friend; you would like her to be a comrade and to treat your fellow activists in a comradely manner. For insight, I called political philosopher and activist Jodi Dean, the author of *Crowds and Party* and a member of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, who has been writing on the idea of "the comrade" and what it looks like in practice. She points out that in the absence of a political party, people are left with no concrete way of resolving problems like yours. "A 'tight-knit activist community' [is] just a circle of friends," Dean observes; without a party, "politics just goes away, and everything is personal." Your community has no mechanism for working through and resolving the merits of the bad-mouther's political criticisms, whereas a party could discuss the disputed question and determine its position. It's also easier to address catty, destructive behavior within a party, Dean says. So when your trash-talking acquaintance complains about a person, you'd be able to say, "Well, how do these disagreements affect our work together?" Of course, you can apply this logic even without a party—bring her attention back to the political work needed in your city and how to continue it. You can also gently suggest that in the age of Trump and climate disaster, you'd prefer to focus on the common ground you share with other progressives. But Dean's ideas are worth heeding. Left parties—Socialist Alternative, Democratic Socialists of America—are growing right now. For you and anyone else weary of endless, personalized political feuds, they may provide a way forward. ■

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MILITARIZATION

Armed and Dangerous

The Trump administration announced on August 28 that it will restore a Defense Department program that gives local police access to surplus military equipment—including grenade launchers, combat vehicles, and war-grade ammunition. Back in 2015, President Barack Obama had placed some restrictions on these Pentagon handouts, though the overall flow continued.

The police-militarization statistics are alarming, and, with the new executive order, serious war-fighting equipment is set to pour back into civilian police forces.

5,674 Number of bayonets, swords, and scabbards acquired by police since 2006

18 Number of axes received by the University of Alabama at Huntsville Police Department

$412K Minimum value of military gear given to the Rising Star Police Department in Texas, which has one full-time employee

46 Minimum number of mine-resistant armored vehicles acquired by police departments in Florida

85 Percentage of Minnesota sheriff's offices that have acquired either assault weapons or combat vehicles

$10,076,167 Value of the military equipment received by the Winthrop Harbor Police Department, which patrols an Illinois town with a population of 6,700

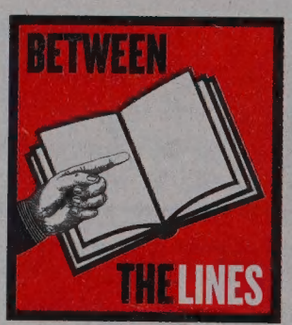
"Summer beach crowds" Justification given by a Delaware sheriff who requested an armored tactical vehicle with a gun turret

Laila Lalami

Unprepared for Disaster

Charity and volunteerism are no substitute for government action.

The map of disasters is immense, and the suffering often anonymous. As I write, firefighters are battling a blaze that has spread across huge swaths of dry land in the San Fernando Valley, 15 miles north of my home in Los Angeles. Monsoon rains in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Niger have resulted in the deaths of over a thousand people. Mudslides in Sierra Leone claimed 500 lives, and many victims are still missing. And in Texas and Louisiana, Hurricane Harvey caused flooding and devastation on a scale rarely seen on the Gulf Coast. Faced with calamities like these, the natural human impulse is to ask: How can I help?



We've already seen heroic answers to that question in the aftermath of Harvey. Texans volunteered at shelters and food banks, donated bottled water and supplies, and searched for survivors in flooded neighborhoods. Several Houston-area mosques opened their doors to evacuees. Jim McIngvale, a local businessman who calls himself "Mattress Mack," turned his furniture stores into shelters for those in need. The Cajun Navy, a group of volunteers from Louisiana, brought their boats across state lines to assist in rescue efforts. And reporters rushed into the eye of the storm to bring us the news. But while these stories inject us with hope, we must also ask why volunteer efforts are so desperately needed in the first place.

A disaster like Harvey raises important questions about the role of government and the effectiveness of its response. All of us depend on a range of local, state, and federal agencies to prepare for an emergency, show leadership as it unfolds, and provide relief in its aftermath. Unfortunately, the record of our current leadership fails to inspire any confidence whatsoever. On the evening of August 25, for example, while Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Texas, President Trump pardoned Joe Arpaio, the Maricopa County sheriff who was accused of racial profiling and systematically violating civil rights in his jails, including an immigration facility often referred to as a "concentration camp." In his announcement of the pardon, Trump called Arpaio an "American patriot" who "kept Arizona safe."

Perhaps hoping to distract from this shockingly inappropriate response, Trump traveled to Texas, ostensibly to witness the devastation caused by the hurricane. Yet it seems he couldn't help but treat the disaster zone as though it were one of his campaign rallies. He showed up in Corpus Christi on August 29 in a branded hat that he sells on his website for $40. Standing between two fire trucks, he promised Texans that "We're gonna get you back and operating immediately. Thank you, everybody. What a crowd! What a turnout!" At a meeting with local leaders, he joked that Harvey "sounds like such an innocent name…right? But it's not, it's not innocent."

This performance was widely criticized, so Trump flew down to Texas on September 2 for a do-over. This time, he went hatless, met with people at shelters, hugged a few children, and vowed (via Twitter, of course) that "we will prevail in the GREAT state of Texas." He also pledged to donate $1 million of his personal fortune to hurricane-relief efforts. Whether any of that money will actually be paid remains to be seen. Trump has—how shall I put this?—a mixed record on charity. *The Washington Post*'s David Fahrenthold reported on several cases in which Trump didn't come through on his pledges, or else paid them through the Trump Foundation—which is to say, with other people's money.

Trump couldn't resist treating the disaster zone as though it were one of his rallies: "What a crowd! What a turnout!"

But Trump's financial pledge can't make up for what he has done to the government's disaster-relief agencies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency had no administrator between January and June, when Brock Long was finally sworn in as the new director. Furthermore, Trump's proposed 2018 budget includes $667 million in cuts to FEMA grants that help cities and states prepare for disasters, as well as a 32 percent cut to NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, whose scientists study environmental phenomena such as (you guessed it) hurricanes and tornadoes. These and other budget cuts are being made in order to provide initial funding for Trump's border wall.

ILLUSTRATION: ANDY FRIEDMAN

Of what use is a border wall to people who are drowning? This question should be asked of all Republicans who are going along with Trump's upside-down priorities, even though they are well aware that his "beautiful" wall is costly, inhumane, and ineffective. As the floodwaters rose in Houston, many people rushed to help, including people targeted by Trump's immigration plans. Alonso Guillen, a 31-year-old beneficiary of DACA (or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, the policy that provides relief for the children of undocumented immigrants), drowned while trying to rescue others. Jesus Contreras, another DACA recipient who was brought to the United States when he was 6 years old, continues to work as a paramedic in Houston. But now that Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions have announced the "orderly wind-down" of DACA, Contreras and 800,000 other young people could be deported, perhaps as early as March of next year, many to countries they've never lived in.

When they return from recess, members of Congress will face the task of voting for federal relief to survivors of Hurricane Harvey. Ted Cruz, who built his career as an advocate of small government, says he hopes he can count on bipartisan support for relief to his state. But it's worth remembering that 23 representatives from Texas, including Senators Cruz and John Cornyn, voted against Hurricane Sandy relief in 2013. There are no atheists in foxholes, as the saying goes, and I am tempted to add that there are no small-government advocates in hurricanes.

We may not be able to prevent natural disasters, but we can prepare for them in a variety of ways, including through proper funding of scientific research and agencies like FEMA. This is the work of the federal government, which Trump and his Republican enablers seem so intent on dismantling. ■

As the floodwaters rose in Houston, many people rushed to help, including people targeted by Trump's immigration plans.

SNAPSHOT / ADREES LATIF

Top Dog

A woman and her poodle float on an air mattress along Houston's Scarsdale Boulevard as they wait to be rescued.

REUTERS

Calvin Trillin

Deadline Poet

A QUESTION FOR STEPHEN MILLER

Stephen Miller's draft of Donald Trump's original "screed" explaining James Comey's firing is now in the hands of the special counsel. —*News reports*

He thrived as being who you'd need
If you had need to write a screed.
Will he still love this sort of writing
If Robert Mueller starts indicting?

THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

It's illegal to set up schools designed to segregate students, but the Justice Department is letting white communities do just that.

by EMMANUEL FELTON

ON WEEKENDS, NORTH SMITHFIELD MANOR SMELLS LIKE FRESHLY CUT GRASS, AS MEN VENture out under the Alabama sun to tend to their lawns. Kids race their bikes up and down the neighborhood's hilly streets. Leslie Williams, a 34-year-old mother of three, lives in her childhood home in this secluded subdivision, perched atop a ridge five miles north of downtown Birmingham. The neighborhood hasn't changed much since Williams was growing up. She remembers riding her bike over the same hills, admiring the men with their lawn mowers, and hanging out in the small park that serves as the community's heart.

After her husband took a job that would keep him on the road most of the time, Williams moved back in with her parents in 2012 to save money. Her daughter, 12, and two sons, 11 and 10, started school, and Williams got a job in medical billing in Jasper, 30 minutes from Birmingham. The plan was for her children to follow in another longtime neighborhood tradition. Since 1971, a county school bus has arrived to take kids from North Smithfield Manor, a small pocket of suburban bliss built by black families who were blocked from buying homes in white subdivisions, to Gardendale High School, Williams's alma mater, eight miles north. But if the white parents in Gardendale get their way, that 46-year-old tradition may come to an end.

On May 16, the eve of the 63rd anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* school-segregation decision, Williams saw a post on Facebook shared by an old high-school friend she knew from her days playing trumpet in the Gardendale marching band: The newly empowered Gardendale Board of Education would be meeting in a few hours. Gardendale, a mostly white city 15 minutes north of Birmingham, had proposed separating from the Jefferson County School District, which encompasses Birmingham's suburbs. The majority of children living in Jefferson County's increasingly diverse subdivisions are black and Latino; Gardendale's new district would be about 80 percent white. The move had come to the attention of the federal judge overseeing a decades-old desegregation order that requires Jefferson County—once a front in the resistance against the *Brown* decision—to maintain racially integrated schools.

Williams knew that she had to be there, so she asked her parents to watch the kids. North Smithfield Manor has long been zoned for Gardendale schools as part of the district's integration efforts, and Williams had planned her life around sending her children to Gardendale High, where more than seven out of 10 graduates enroll in college—one of the highest rates in the district. The majority-white city's secession effort soon turned Williams into a reluctant community spokesperson.

> "The media has twisted and turned this issue to make everyone think this is about race."
>
> —Chris Orazine, Gardendale parent

Williams is a woman with a strong, round face and prominent features, and she easily charms strangers with her warmth and wit. That night, she twisted her braided hair into a tight bun and put on black slacks and a black-and-white cardigan, then headed out the door to fight the rush-hour traffic.

When she arrived at Gardendale City Hall, there was only standing room left in the large, mahogany-paneled hearing room. One of just a handful of black attendees, Williams walked past police officers and walls decorated with photos of the suburban city's current and former elected officials, all of whom are white, to take an open spot along the wall. Six years into a parent-led campaign to break off from the Jefferson County School District, the Gardendale school board was meeting to discuss how it would set up the new district. Jefferson County's desegregation order meant that Gardendale had been forced to get permission from the federal courts. Weeks earlier, the federal judge overseeing the case, Madeline Hughes Haikala, had approved the formation of the new school district. Haikala's ruling meant that Gardendale could effec-

The proposed Gardendale School District would keep the region's new $55 million high school.

tively wall itself off from Jefferson County's schools. With their own separate district, Gardendale schools would be open only to Gardendale residents, instead of the much larger and more diverse swath of Jefferson County that they currently serve. Families in Williams's virtually all-black neighborhood were set to lose access to the schools that have served their community for half a century.

After the school board's members discussed their plan for hiring all of the personnel needed to start a new school system in just a few weeks, they opened up the floor to the public. Despite their success in getting their district approved, Gardendale's parents were angry. Over the previous few months, the city's push for a new school district had garnered national attention, including two articles in *The Washington Post*. "The media has twisted and turned this issue to make everyone think this is about race," said Chris Orazine, a white Gardendale dad. "The people who live in this community and love this community know that nothing is further from the truth. But the fact is that damage has been done."

Speaker after speaker complained about how the city had been portrayed. This wasn't about race, they insisted, but about doing what was best for "our" children. But Williams knew that her children weren't included in that "our." Just the night before, at a meeting in her own neighborhood, Jefferson County's superintendent presented Williams and the other parents with a list of schools their kids could choose if Gardendale left the district. All of the schools served more black and poor students than Gardendale's, and all had far worse test scores. At the Gardendale meeting, Williams stood by quietly until she couldn't take it anymore.

As she headed to the front of the packed hearing room, Williams felt glad that she had dressed up. "I'm a product of the schools they don't want my children to be at," she said later. "I wanted to be a perfect example of why they should include them."

When she got to the front of the room, Williams faced the audience instead of the all-white school board and tried to level with them as parents. "I just want my kids to have the best opportunity, whether it be Jefferson County or whether it be Gardendale," she said. "Like you, I just want my children to have the best.

"The options they've given us are schools that are already overcrowded. I have never had a problem with Gardendale forming their own school system. The problem is: How is this going to be done?"

After the meeting ended, two parents approached Williams in the lobby. One mother tried to convince her that the separation effort had nothing to do with excluding black kids like hers. Looking back, Williams wishes she had made a different argument that night.

"The one thing that would help keep my kids—or any child—off the streets is access to good education," Williams said. "You are trying to take that from them. I don't care how you word it; I don't care how you try to dress it up. The bottom line is you are taking that from them."

"The one thing that would keep my kids off the streets is good education. You are trying to take that from them."
—Leslie Williams

IT'S ILLEGAL TO FORM A SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH the purpose of excluding people because of their race. Yet over the years, Jefferson County's white residents have been allowed to carve out half a dozen exclusive enclaves. In 1954, when the Supreme Court handed down its landmark *Brown* ruling declaring that separate schools for black and white children were inherently unequal, there were five school districts in Jefferson County. In the 63 years since then, that number has more than doubled as white communities established new school districts separate from the increasingly black and Latino county district. If Gardendale succeeds, it would become the 13th school district in Jefferson County. While this kind of splintering has been going on across the country, what makes the Jefferson County case unique is the federal government's power to stop it there. That's because Jefferson County is one of just 176 school districts, out of the 13,500 across the nation, that are still under federal oversight to make sure they're keeping their promise to fully eliminate all vestiges of Jim Crow.

Yet six decades after *Brown*, federal judges and officials rarely check to see if districts are obeying their orders to desegregate—and in many cases, schools in districts with a history of discrimination against black children have actually grown *more* segregated under federal supervision. And when the judges do step in, they've often sided with the districts where school segregation is getting worse. Leslie Williams and the other parents who have fought these moves have been left wondering how the courts and the Justice Department could have so completely turned their backs on the vision of integrated schools first charted out by civil-rights lawyers and the courts in the 1950s and '60s.

"To separate [African-American children] from oth-

Emmanuel Felton is a staff writer at The Hechinger Report. *Additional reporting was contributed by Nicole Lewis.*

This story was produced by The Hechinger Report, *an independent nonprofit news organization focused on inequality and innovation in education.*

ers of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone," wrote Chief Justice Earl Warren in his *Brown v. Board of Education* opinion. Warren cited the work of black psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark. The husband-and-wife team used dolls to examine the effects of segregation on black children, finding evidence of internalized racism in the black children's clear preference for the white dolls.

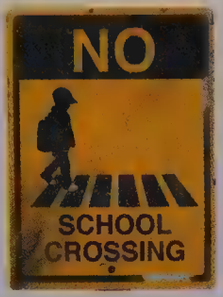
Since then, the focus has turned to academic performance, usually as measured by test scores, and over the years even conservative scholars like Eric Hanushek, a fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, have found that segregation hurts children of color. Researchers have observed that while the racial test-score gap isn't completely closed when schools are integrated, black students' scores tend to go up when they're in integrated environments. White children's scores, meanwhile, aren't affected either way by exposure to children of color. In his research, Rucker Johnson, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, has looked beyond test scores. He's found that white students who attend integrated schools have measurably less racial prejudice and tend to live in more integrated neighborhoods as adults. As for African Americans, Johnson has found that those who attended integrated schools earn more as adults, live longer, healthier lives, and even pass down these benefits to their children.

"There are long-term impacts that sometimes test scores don't even pick up," Johnson says. "If you only focus on the educational outcomes, you grossly understate the impact of these court cases." Adult incomes for black children in integrated schools were improved, and "the likelihood of being in poverty, the likelihood of incarceration, were all significantly reduced—and the longer they were exposed to integrated schools, the bigger the payoff."

In 2001, Williams graduated from Gardendale High and moved to Huntsville to attend Alabama A&M. By the time she returned in 2012, the county district had transformed from one in which white students made up almost 80 percent of the student body to one that primarily serves black and Latino children. The number of students from families with incomes low enough to qualify for federal lunch aid had increased from 27 percent to 56 percent. Every time a white community jettisoned the county district, they left behind an increasingly nonwhite and poorer student body and put more pressure on the remaining white communities to follow suit.

"Segregated environments breed unequal allocation of resources," says Johnson, who is working on a book about school segregation. "We as a nation must come to terms with what segregation does. We have to recognize that it's not just about the ideal of integrating schoolchildren, but about ensuring equal educational opportunities."

When breakaway districts leave, they don't only take students and school buildings with them; they also take tax revenue. The state of affairs in sprawling, diverse Jefferson County is a case in point. In the early 2000s, two cities, Leeds and Trussville, with schools that were 62



THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

"We've always had problems with Gardendale. It was a sundown town—blacks didn't even buy gas there."

—U.W. Clemon, attorney

and 87 percent white, respectively, left the county district to form their own majority-white school systems. After Trussville broke off in 2005, school officials there set about building the most expensive school ever constructed in Alabama: Hewitt-Trussville High School. The new district's boundary lines are jagged: They include prized retail establishments and exclude modest neighborhoods and rental complexes like the Bentwood Apartments, a set of tidy two-story apartment buildings. The brick buildings are racially integrated, but the majority of families with school-age children are black. While Hewitt-Trussville is the closest public high school to the Bentwood Apartments, its doors are locked to the families there. Instead, Bentwood kids go to a county school that is farther away in the other direction—the very situation that prompted the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision more than 60 years ago.

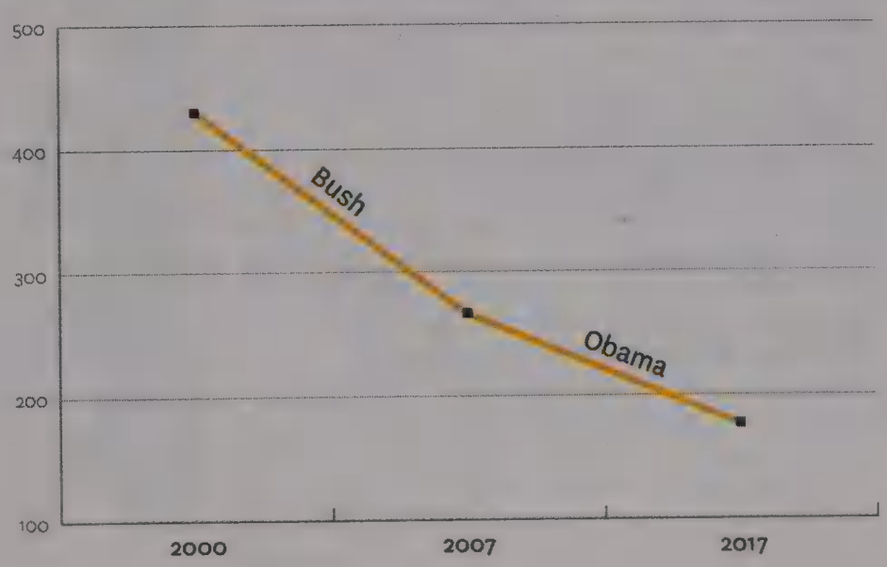
The nearby county high school is 66 percent black; Hewitt-Trussville is 81 percent white. Trussville officials did make sure to draw in the shopping malls, though. So when Bentwood residents go up to the main road to spend their money, their sales-tax dollars flow to the very schools they can't use.

When Williams decided to move back to Jefferson County, she inadvertently entered her family into a battle that is likely to be one of the last fronts in the long war for school desegregation. It's a battle that black families and school integrationists are losing.

GARDENDALE'S EFFORT TO BREAK OFF FROM THE Jefferson County School District has proceeded in fits and starts for decades now. According to U.W. Clemon, an attorney who represented black families in *Stout v. Jefferson County*, the desegregation case that covers Jefferson and all of its splinter districts, people in Gardendale have talked about splitting off since court-mandated desegregation started in 1971. "We've always had problems with

THE DECLINE OF FEDERAL OVERSIGHT

George W. Bush's administration prioritized releasing school districts from federal court orders to desegregate. The Obama administration used consent decrees to slow this process, requiring districts to present convincing desegregation plans before shedding their orders. The Trump administration has disavowed the use of consent decrees.



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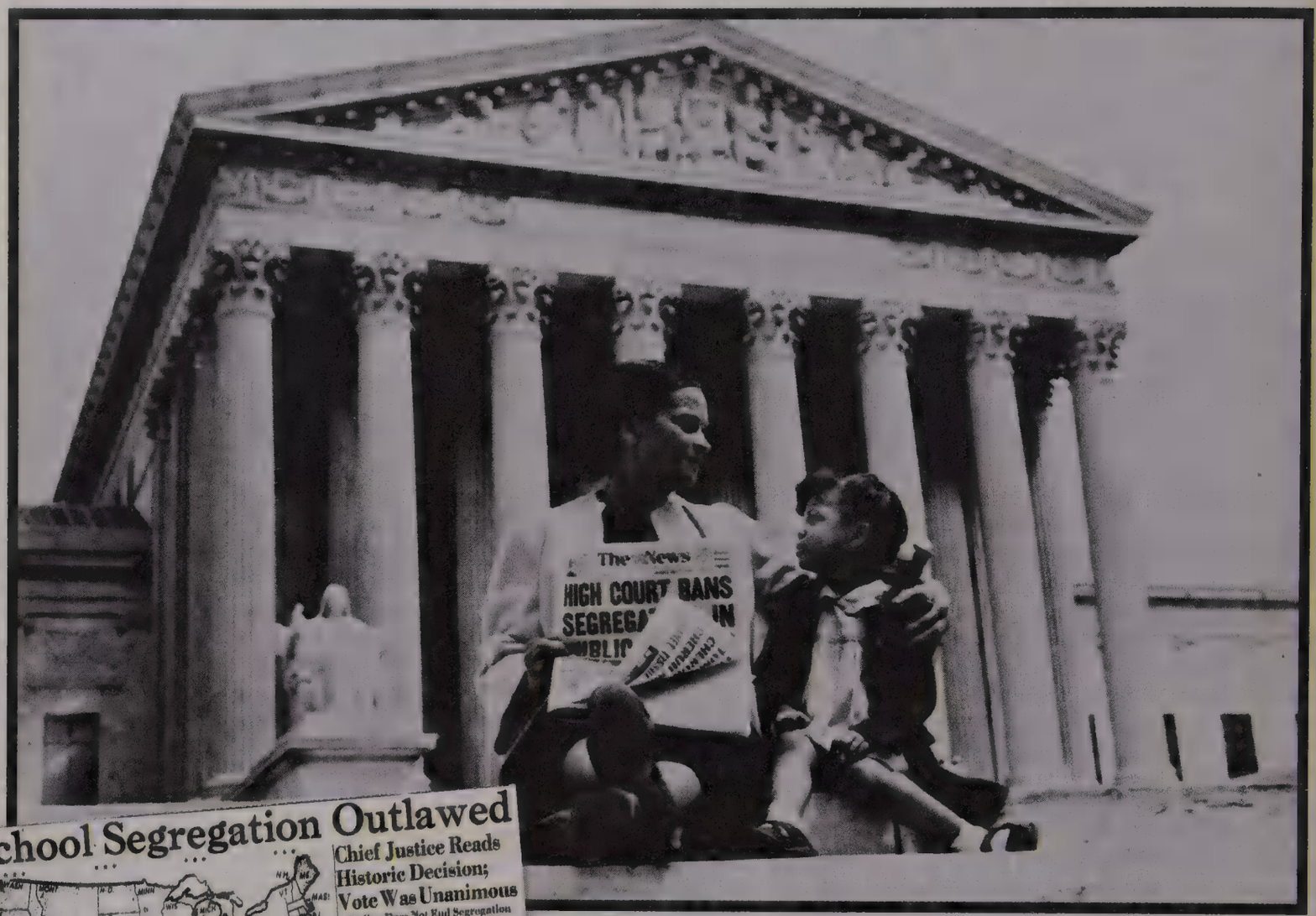


1954 ***Brown v. Board of Education*** outlawed segregation and declared "separate but equal" a dangerous fiction.

Gardendale. It was a sundown town—blacks didn't even buy gas there," says Clemon, who grew up in Jefferson County.

But the idea was taken up in earnest in the 1990s, after the city of Hoover became the first to break away from the Jefferson County district since the early '70s. Scott Beason, a longtime state representative and senator, brought the idea out of Gardendale living rooms when he began talking about the split in the halls of the Capitol in Montgomery. Beason, a Gardendale resident, is one of Alabama's most controversial figures. He was a driving force behind the state's infamous 2011 immigration crackdown, which required police to inquire about the legal status of anyone they had a "reasonable suspicion" was in the country unlawfully. Beason has said that Republican lawmakers need to "empty the clip" on "illegal immigrants" or risk losing the state. In 2011, in a voting-rights case, a federal court found that Beason had displayed outright racial bias, citing, among other examples, the time he called black people "aborigines." His "statements demonstrate a deep-seated racial animus," the judge in the case wrote.

Former state senator Scott Beason, a champion of separate school districts, once called black people "aborigines."

The push for a separate Gardendale district fizzled out after two feasibility studies, the first in 1999 and another in 2005, both recommended against forming a new district. But two local dads revived the idea in 2011. David Salters is a father of four and a sales and operations director at a professional-services firm. Born in Birmingham in 1972, just as white families began fleeing the city in large numbers, Salters has seen the long-lasting impact of white flight. His family moved to Morris, a working-class city in north Jefferson County. Salters graduated from a nearly all-white Mortimer Jordan High in 1991. He says the school wasn't especially good: Less than half of his classmates went on to college after graduation. Salters himself spent 13 years working off and on trying to finish his bachelor's degree. He eventually graduated from the University of Alabama at the age of 31. In his graduation photos, Salters is holding a baby—his oldest son—and posing with his dad, who didn't complete high school. Since then, Salters has spent most of his career working in sales.

Driving around Birmingham on a June afternoon, Salters points out the apartment complexes and neighborhoods that his family once lived in, their streets now pocked with blighted houses. "People will just leave," he says. He's concerned that Gardendale will follow the

same path as Center Point, which the mass departure of white families transformed into a majority-black suburb, now home to the district's lowest-performing schools.

Salters is proud that he's come further than his own parents, but he also worries that his kids will struggle as much as he did to earn a degree. In 2011, he and another dad, Chris Lucas, a lawyer at a Birmingham-based bank, began talking about what they perceived as a deterioration in the quality of Gardendale schools. Salters said that he and Lucas, also a graduate of the University of Alabama, were particularly alarmed by the ACT scores. "The average ACT score at Gardendale High School is a 19; the average student entering Alabama has a 26," Salters says. "We're not talking about trying to get our kids into a super-elite school like Vanderbilt or Emory. We're worried that they won't have the opportunities we had."

THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

IN SEPTEMBER 2012, TIM BAGWELL, ANOTHER DAD, set up a Facebook group for Gardendale's latest separation campaign. He added Lucas as an administrator, and Lucas added Salters. By October 2012, they had convinced the City Council to fund the third feasibility study in 13 years. The 2005 study had concluded that the cost of constructing a new high school was one of the barriers to forming a new district; but in the interim, the county had built a brand-new $55 million high school in Gardendale with money the district had raised from a countywide penny sales tax and new debt. The new Gardendale High School added 300,000 square feet to the existing building. The school now hosts a 650-seat performing-arts center, a 100-seat lecture hall, and two gyms: a 1,600-seat competition gym and a 300-seat practice gym. It also has a new baseball stadium, softball stadium, and practice fields.

The new construction had to be approved by all of the parties involved in Jefferson County's desegregation case. Everyone agreed, under the assumption that the school would serve as a regional career and technical-education (CTE) center. As a sort of magnet program, the new school would help Jefferson County's desegregation efforts by drawing students from around the district. Three predominantly white schools, Corner High, Mortimer Jordan High, and Oak Grove High, and two predominantly black schools, Center Point High and Minor High, would send some of their students there for CTE courses. During court testimony, Craig Pouncey, the superintendent of the Jefferson County School District, called the new Gardendale school "the epitome of one of the best high schools anyone could ever hope for" and "an asset to any community."

The flier showed a young white girl looking up at the question: "Which path will Gardendale choose?"

The author of the latest feasibility study—an expert who had been brought in by other splinter districts—agreed with that assessment. If Gardendale could separate and take the high school with it, the district would boast a brand-new facility with very little debt, a fact that the expert called "unprecedented" and "remarkable." But the expert outlined one major hurdle still left: To pay for the new district, supporters would have to get residents in this conservative community to vote in favor of increasing their own taxes. A referendum was placed on the ballot for November 12, 2013.

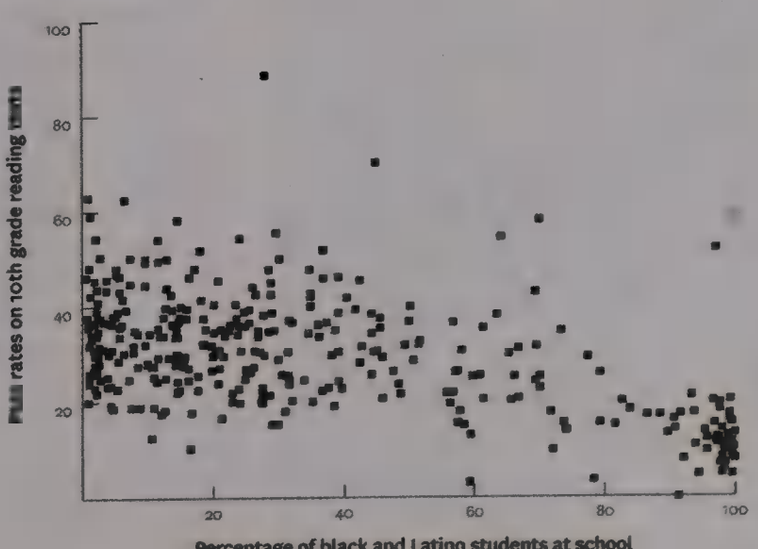
By then, Salters and the other dads had formalized the secession effort in an organization called FOCUS Gardendale, which they incorporated as a nonprofit to campaign for the property-tax increase. The group enlisted former state senator Beason to give them political advice. While Beason wasn't out front in this push, he and his wife contributed money to FOCUS Gardendale, and his former campaign manager assisted the group.

In addition to going door-to-door asking voters to support the tax, the secession effort's proponents created a number of campaign ads. In one flier, they asked voters to consider Gardendale's future. The flier showed a young white girl looking up at the question: "Which path will Gardendale choose?" To her side are two lists of communities in Jefferson County. The first includes towns that have large and growing black populations, all of them still served by the county district. The second list includes "some of the best places to live in the country"; they're the predominantly white cities that formed their own school districts, where the enrollment ranges from 57 to 82 percent white. The supporters also put together a video that laid out the benefits of a new school district and warned against what might happen if Gardendale stayed in the county district. "By voting yes, we eliminate the possibility of our own Gardendale High School becoming a regional school," a voice-over intoned. "By voting yes, we avoid the risk of our local children being negatively impacted by the possible merger of the Jefferson County School Board with the Birmingham City School Board." (At the time, the predominantly black Memphis City schools in Tennessee had just been absorbed into the mostly white county district; subsequently, six majority-white suburbs there formed their own districts.)

The campaigning worked. About 35 percent of Gardendale voters turned out for the special election and voted by a margin of 58–42 to approve the tax. After the vote, the City Council appointed the first members of the new Gardendale Board of Education. By June 2014, they had recruited Patrick Martin as the new superintendent.

SEGREGATION AND TEST SCORES

Data produced by *The Hechinger Report* show the declining test scores that accompany resegregation. Students in segregated schools also feel the effects later in life, tending to have lower incomes and to live in segregated neighborhoods.



Martin, whose wife was moving to Birmingham to take a coaching job at the University of Alabama campus there, was recruited from a small district near Peoria, Illinois. When U.W. Clemon, the lawyer in the *Stout* case, deposed him, Martin testified that he had never hired a black teacher in his life. He had also never worked in a district that was more than 5 percent African-American. It would be Martin's responsibility to come up with a desegregation plan that would have to include, among other things, a strategy for hiring more black teachers.

At the same time, the new Gardendale school board went about negotiating a separation agreement with Jefferson County. When they were unable to agree on terms like a suitable price for the high school, they petitioned the state superintendent to mediate. During that time, Beason tried and failed to enlist the governor's help. Eventually, the state superintendent sided with Gardendale and approved the split, but noted that the federal court overseeing Jefferson County's desegregation case would have the final say.

David Salters says this was the first time that Jefferson Country had invoked the desegregation case. He thinks that county officials triggered the case as their last, best hope to keep Gardendale's $55 million high school in the district. At the time, Salters didn't think the desegregation case would be a barrier, because he and the other Gardendale parents had seen so many other cities leave county districts that were still under court order. In addition to Leeds and Trussville in Jefferson County, Pelham and Alabaster—two Birmingham suburbs in neighboring Shelby County—had recently been allowed to break away. Salters wonders where the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund, the Justice Department, and the federal courts were when those splits happened uneventfully. Indeed, the Justice Department had given its blessing in all those cases, and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund even sided with Leeds and Trussville. But that was before U.W. Clemon returned to the case and breathed new life into the county's desegregation fight.

"If Gardendale is successful, every other majority-white community that wishes to withdraw can do so."
—U.W. Clemon

In its first court filings, Gardendale implied that the Supreme Court's *Brown* ruling was now outdated. The city's lawyers urged the judge to rely on decisions that the Supreme Court had made since 1991, when the Court, under Chief Justice William Rehnquist, had started chipping away at *Brown*'s legacy. Gardendale also cited *Shelby County v. Holder*, a case that originated in another Birmingham suburb that eventually led the Court to gut the Voting Rights Act in 2012. Gardendale argued that "courts must open their eyes to the conditions of the present when they consider" the degree to which court-ordered consent decrees impinge "on federalism and the Tenth Amendment."

The assertion that the county's current desegregation order, which was finalized in 1971, had become antiquated provoked a strong reaction from Judge Haikala.

"The Supreme Court's holding in *Brown* is simple and unaffected by the passage of time: when black public school students are treated as if they are inferior to white students, and that treatment is institutionalized by state or municipal action, the resulting stigma unconstitutionally assails the integrity of black students. That racial stigma is intolerable under the Fourteenth Amendment. That was true in 1954, and it is true today," she wrote. "For black children who waited until 1865 to be recognized as United States citizens [with the ratification of the 13th Amendment] and then waited until 1971 to be admitted into white classrooms in Jefferson County public schools, the 46-year-old desegregation order in this case must seem relatively young."

In contrast to the cases of Trussville and Leeds, when the Justice Department under George W. Bush stood on the sidelines, Barack Obama's Justice Department came out against Gardendale leaving Jefferson County. Federal lawyers filed a brief calling for the courts to block the separation. Amy Berman, who worked on these cases under both the Bush and Obama administrations, says the Justice Department has actively opposed several of these splinter districts but has been unable to sway the courts, which make the final decision on them.

Meanwhile, Clemon rounded up new plaintiffs for Jefferson County's old desegregation case, mostly parents and grandparents from North Smithfield Manor, Leslie Williams's neighborhood. Clemon, who grew up attending all-black Jefferson County schools, started fighting splinter districts after he graduated from Columbia Law School in 1968 and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund assigned him to Jefferson County. He was on the case until 1980, when President Jimmy Carter appointed him as a federal judge. Gardendale's push to separate from the Jefferson County School District brought Clemon out of retirement, because he thinks it could prove to be a dangerous precedent.

"If Gardendale is successful," Clemon says, "every other majority-white community that wishes to withdraw from a metro system under [court] order can do so."

1959
In Little Rock, Arkansas, a rally against the integration of Central High School.

THE SOUTH'S SCHOOLS WERE ONCE THE MOST INTEgrated in the country, thanks to the heavy hand of the federal government as it tried to force Southern districts to abide by *Brown v. Board of Education*. From 1968 to 1980, during the height of aggressive court supervision, the number of black students attending highly segregated schools in the South fell from almost 80 percent to a low of about 23 percent. But in the last three and a half decades, the number of black students attending segregated schools in the South has increased to nearly 36 percent. The federal government's retreat is a main factor in the return of segregated schooling in the South. In 2000, there were 430 school

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districts under federal court order to desegregate, compared with 176 today. Without the feds watching, local school boards are prone to make decisions that end up separating kids by race.

Even in places where the federal government is supposed to be paying attention, segregation is on the rise. Most of the 176 districts still under supervision are in the Deep South, the result of whole swaths of Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia being put under supervision in statewide cases. But the rest are scattered across the United States and include places like Tucson, Arizona, and Waterbury, Connecticut. Out of that total, 69 have a student body diverse enough to run integrated schools, but local officials instead chose to operate "racially identifiable" or segregated campuses, according to a *Hechinger Report* analysis of enrollment data.

Alabama is home to the most students attending school districts under federal supervision, and these schools follow the national pattern. In 1995, the first year of readily available enrollment data in Alabama, 10 out of the 40 districts under continuous court supervision had demographics that would have allowed them to integrate, but instead chose to run 48 segregated schools. Today, 12 districts that could integrate run 101 segregated schools that serve just over 54,000 children—an increase of almost 30,000 students.

Last year, the Government Accountability Office issued a scathing report chiding the Justice Department for not even tracking basic details about the districts that remain under order. In 2014, Madeline Hughes Haikala, the judge overseeing many of the remaining desegregation cases in northern Alabama, including Gardendale's, came to a similar conclusion while reviewing Huntsville's 40-year-old desegregation case.

"From the record, it appears that years of relative calm and inactivity have lulled the government into a habit of checking in only when the district proposes actions that require the government's review," Haikala wrote. "Based on the current record, the Court does not know when inequities in educational programs arose in the district; however, standardized test scores from 10 years ago demonstrate disparate results among racially identifiable schools. Had the government been keeping an eye on that sort of information, it could have brought it to the Court's attention more quickly and enabled the Court and the district to address the issue in a timely fashion."

Former Justice Department lawyers defend the department's work, saying that both Democratic and Republican administrations have failed to adequately invest in making desegregation real. While Obama's Justice Department racked up wins in dozens of cases, including a high-profile case in Cleveland, Mississippi, officials in many districts with segregated schools report that they hadn't heard from either the Justice Department or the courts during Obama's tenure.

Many of the 176 outstanding cases have been in a

1963
The March on Washington demanded true school integration, nine years after *Brown*.

The South's schools were once the most integrated in the country, thanks to the heavy hand of the federal government.

state of suspended animation for years, if not decades. While the original court-mandated desegregation plans usually required districts to provide reports on a semi-annual basis, many districts don't bother. Officials in several districts contacted by *The Hechinger Report* said that they hadn't heard from the Justice Department or the courts in 20 years.

One former high-level figure in Obama's Justice Department said that during the federal hiring freeze that took hold in 2011, the department's Educational Opportunities Section, which not only oversees all of the school-desegregation cases but also other cases involving equal access to quality education, had only a dozen or so lawyers handling the section's 350 cases. (The Justice Department declined to confirm the number of cases.) According to one former official from Obama's Justice Department, it simply didn't have the manpower to actively oversee every district still under order, so it relied instead on community members and activists on the ground to bring the department's attention to problem spots. That strategy put the onus to fight for integrated schools on some of the country's most historically marginalized communities.

Lawyers inside and outside of the Justice Department say the department's attorneys must be cautious. Over the last two decades, judges and case law have become increasingly hostile to those seeking to compel districts to desegregate their schools. The precedent was set in 1991, when the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell* that lower-court judges should dissolve desegregation plans if they believed that the districts had accomplished as much integration as was feasible. That ruling has provided an easy out for many districts. Since 2000, more than 250 districts overseen by the Justice Department have been declared "unitary," meaning they've done all that's "feasible" to eliminate their Jim Crow systems, leaving the Justice Department almost no power to tackle inequalities in those communities.

"There's never been more than a very small handful of lawyers that have been working on these cases," says Gary Orfield, a desegregation scholar who has served as an expert witness in desegregation cases since the 1970s. "There's no one who can go to Two Springs, Mississippi, to check out what's going on. In American law in general, nothing happens unless someone files an order. The problem is you have school districts and courts that were never enthusiastic about this. I just talked to a district that didn't know they were under court order. There may have been 10 superintendents since this all started."

The next few years may well prove to be the last in the federal effort to desegregate schools. Trump's presidency could provide the final blow. During George W. Bush's administration, almost 200 districts shed their court orders. With just 176 districts left, Trump's Justice Department could bring an end to the 63-year-old effort to erase the legacy of Jim Crow in the American education system, at a time when nearly 8.4 million black and Latino children are learning in segregated and high-poverty schools.

The Justice Department failed to respond to multiple requests for comment.

Leslie Williams says she's torn about all of this. Before going to Gardendale High School, she attended an all-black Christian school run by a neighbor. She doesn't think there's necessarily anything wrong with an all-black school, but she would like her three children to be exposed to people from different kinds of backgrounds, just as she was at Gardendale High—the kind of education that is quickly disappearing across the South. Williams wants them to be in a place where they won't feel pressure to fit into any box—where her daughter, who plays alto saxophone, her sports-loving middle son, and her science-loving younger son can explore their interests.

"I want to say, 'Of course diversity is a good thing,' but it's a blessing and a curse," Williams says. "The blessing is, you get to be around different groups of people, you are learning different things—but the problem is, not all groups are as welcoming to the idea of being inclusive and being diverse. Some people are only forced to be around other people."

"Years of relative calm have lulled the government into checking in only when the district proposes actions that require review."
—Judge Madeline Hughes Haikala

Williams's hometown of North Smithfield Manor would be rezoned under Gardendale's proposal for a new school district.

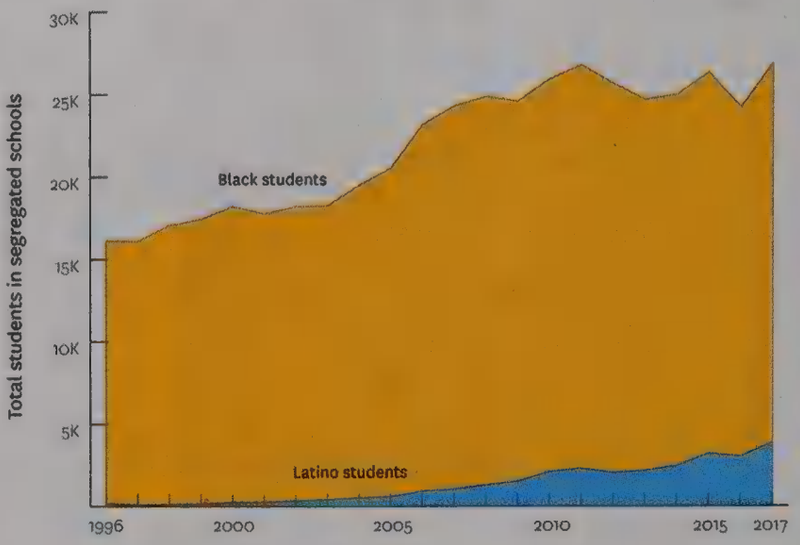
After the desegregation issue was raised, Gardendale had to change course. The district as originally proposed was intended only for Gardendale residents, but once desegregation came up, the organizers decided to add students from North Smithfield Manor. In new court filings, the district proposed allowing them to attend school there "indefinitely," although the mostly black suburb wouldn't be formally included in the district's boundaries. Legally, Gardendale can't annex North Smithfield Manor and make it part of the city, because the two communities aren't contiguous. So the arrangement would be tenuous. North Smithfield Manor parents couldn't vote in school-board elections and wouldn't have a say in how the district was run. And when Gardendale's desegregation order is dissolved, nothing

would stop the district from dropping the neighborhood.

This proposed arrangement didn't satisfy Judge Haikala. "Race was a motivating factor in Gardendale's decision to separate from the Jefferson County public school system," Haikala wrote in April 2017. "More specifically, a desire to control the racial demographics of the four public schools in the City of Gardendale and the racial demographics of the city itself motivated the grassroots effort to separate and to eliminate from the Gardendale school zone black students whom Jefferson County transports to Gardendale schools under the terms of the desegregation order."

SEGREGATION ON THE RISE

The number of students of color in segregated schools in Alabama has grown significantly since the mid-'90s, when the formation of white school districts gained momentum. Southern schools are more segregated today than they were 40 years ago.



Haikala supported her contention that race was driving the secession effort with quotes from several of David Salters's Facebook posts. "A look around at our community sporting events, our churches are great snapshots of our community," Salters wrote. "A look into our schools, and you'll see something totally different." In another post, he wrote: "We are using buses to transport nonresidents into our schools (without additional funding) from as far away as Center Point (there's your redistribution of wealth)."

Salters insists that his Facebook posts were taken out of context and that his campaign to create a new school district was driven by his desire to improve the quality of education, rather than to exclude children from outside of Gardendale. He adds that residents in the conservative community wouldn't have voted to increase their taxes if they didn't think there were real problems with how the schools were being run.

Haikala, an Obama appointee, has been tougher on school districts than almost any judge in decades. But in the end, that didn't mean much. In April, she ruled that Gardendale could break away. Gardendale would start with two elementary schools and would have to work in "good faith" to earn the middle and high schools. She also eliminated from the proposed new district North Smithfield Manor and the other outlying white communities, which would have enjoyed a 13-year grandfathering period, arguing that this only created more uncertainty for Jefferson County's desegregation efforts. Haikala said she ultimately sided with Gardendale because she understood the merits of local control and because she feared that black kids in Gardendale would be targeted if she ruled against the white residents.

But the alternative may prove worse for black families. When Leslie Williams moved back to North Smithfield Manor in 2012, it was a good bet: The Gardendale schools have served families from North Smithfield relatively well. According to a report done by the Justice Department's education expert, Gardendale High enrolls more of its black students in Advanced Placement courses than the three high schools where North Smithfield Manor families may eventually end up sending their children. At Gardendale, which offers 12 AP classes, a quarter of black students enroll in at least one of those courses. Fultondale High and Center Point High, where North Smithfield Manor students could be transferred, offer only six AP courses, and just 8 percent of black students enroll in them. Indeed, the majority of Center Point students who go on to attend an Alabama public college have to take remedial courses to catch up to their peers.

Both Gardendale and the black families contesting its secession effort have filed appeals, which means Gardendale city schools won't start up this fall as planned. The Justice Department, now led by Trump appointee Jeff Sessions, has yet to weigh in on the case.

Few places under the Justice Department's watch have been as bold as Gardendale. In the other 175 districts under court order to desegregate, the process of abandoning *Brown*'s mandate has been much quieter and more complicated, if no less harmful to the students living there. Pickens County, Alabama, a rural school district 80 miles west of Birmingham, is one of those places still on the Justice Department's docket where integration has eroded slowly, with little notice from the feds.

Pickens County forms the northern tip of the Alabama Black Belt, a reference both to the dark, fertile soils that once supported a thriving cotton-plantation economy and to the people who live there. To this day, the county is home to far more black residents than communities just to the north, which are nearly all-white. Today, timberland accounts for most of the county's acreage, and trucks stacked with freshly cut logs roar up and down the county's two-lane highways. Pickens County is also home to over 500 working farms, and together agriculture and forestry provide nearly half of the jobs. Little has changed there in the last half-century, except for the schools.

"Race was a motivating factor in Gardendale's decision to separate from the Jefferson County public school system."
—Judge Haikala

PICKENS COUNTY WAS DRAWN INTO A STATEWIDE lawsuit responding to Governor George Wallace's notorious campaign to keep black and white students segregated. Black plaintiffs in Macon County, Alabama, won a federal court case that allowed black students to be admitted to the all-white Tuskegee High School in 1963; in response, Wallace sent the National Guard to block the school's doors. When that plan failed, he ordered that Tuskegee High be closed and white parents reimbursed for sending their children to a new all-white private school. Wallace's plan backfired: By so blatantly using the state government to keep schools segregated, he opened the

door for Alabama to become the only state in which all public schools had to submit to federal supervision. Alabama districts that weren't already under their own desegregation orders became defendants in the *Lee v. Macon* case.

At first, Pickens County tried a so-called freedom-of-choice plan, in which families could choose a different school from the one their child attended. During the first year of court-ordered desegregation, the 1967–68 school year, fewer than 1 percent of the county's black students chose to move to one of the white schools. By the 1969–70 school year, 16 percent of black children attended those schools, yet not a single white family had chosen to leave a historically white campus. In 1968, the Supreme Court ruled that choice plans didn't fulfill the promise of *Brown*. Districts across the country were forced to devise new plans for meaningful integration. In 1969, a federal court finalized a new plan for Pickens County, forcing it to merge its dual system of white and black schools. At the time, the district was 54 percent black. The court created four sets of schools. Under the court's original plan, the demographics of each cluster ranged from 25 percent black, in Gordo, to 72 percent black, in Aliceville. But in the last couple of decades, the schools in Pickens County have become increasingly segregated.

From the beginning, Pickens County officials undermined the new desegregation plan. For decades, they allowed white students zoned to majority-black schools to quietly transfer to other schools both inside and outside the county. In 1989, black residents of Pickens County sidestepped the Justice Department and filed a complaint with the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. The office found that the district had indeed been using transfers to allow white students to escape majority-black schools. While the district didn't admit to improper transfers, it agreed to tighten up its transfer policies. A 1994 court agreement required Pickens County to deny transfer requests that would hinder desegregation efforts, although there were a number of exceptions—for example, families could get a transfer if they established that a school placement jeopardized a child's health or safety.

But the rampant transfers continued unabated. In 1998, in its reports to the court, the district acknowledged granting 123 transfers that year. A third of those transfers were for white students to leave Aliceville schools, where just six white students remained. The pattern continued for years, until the Justice Department reached out to the district in the early 2000s. But by 2003, the damage had already been done. In Carrollton, the small county seat, the elementary and high schools so struggled to keep up white enrollment that in 2006, Pickens County asked the Justice Department and the federal courts to let it close all of the town's schools. The Justice Department sided with county officials. In justifying their decision, the department's lawyers made a point of noting that a black superintendent introduced the plan to close the predominantly black schools.

THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Pickens County, Alabama, has taken a less brazen but equally harmful approach to resegregation.

TODAY, THE REMAINING SCHOOLS IN PICKENS County are a picture of the half-hearted progress that the nation has made toward ending its legacy of racial segregation. Two schools in the county remain integrated: In the town of Reform, an elementary school and high school have student populations that are close to the overall makeup of the district. But over 80 percent of the district's white students attend Gordo schools, where white students make up 64 percent of the population. More than half of the district's black students go to school in Aliceville, where black students comprise 98 percent of the student body.

Similarly, across the 176 school districts still under order, black and Latino students are increasingly enrolled in schools that don't reflect their district's racial makeup. When demographics in a school vary from the district's overall numbers by more than 20 percentage points—for example, a school that is 60 percent black in a district that's only 35 percent black—experts call these schools "racially identifiable." They say these numbers signal that a district could do more to integrate. In Pickens County, five out of the seven schools are racially identifiable. And looking at all of the 40 Alabama districts the federal government has been overseeing for decades, there are 125 racially identifiable schools today, up from 72 in 1995. Today, almost 64,000 Alabama children attend such schools, despite being enrolled in districts under court order to desegregate.

While there was talk in the early 1990s about consolidating Pickens County schools—two of the county's three high schools serve just about 275 kids, and Gordo serves 550 students—that idea was quickly quashed by vocal opposition from white parents in Gordo. No one believes that integration is really a possibility in Pickens

1973
Black and white children ride an integrated school bus in Charlotte, North Carolina.

County anymore, despite the desegregation order that's supposed to dictate how schools are run in the district. Instead, officials and many local residents are all in agreement that the focus should be on improving the quality of education for black students. The court approved a new "desegregation" plan in 2011. It focuses on eliminating disparities between black and white students in a variety of areas, including graduation rates, suspensions and exclusions, scholarships, and enrollment in advanced courses like honors and AP classes.

Vanessa Anthony, the district's associate superintendent and a graduate of Aliceville High School, thinks *Lee v. Macon* helped the district. "Like with No Child Left Behind forcing us to report out how different groups were doing, the *Lee v. Macon* case has forced us to look at how everyone is doing, not just the top performers," says Anthony, who is black.

But she also notes that Pickens County has bigger concerns than making sure students are evenly distributed by race across the district's schools. It's hard to get teachers to stay in a rural district with few amenities, and students are moving away too, making it difficult to provide a high-quality education for anyone, Anthony says.

In the end, school officials in Pickens County are hoping they will somehow be able to make separate equal.

So far, however, making separate equal isn't working out very well in the segregated schools that the Justice Department oversees in Alabama and elsewhere. Alabama's data show a relatively strong correlation between segregation and failure, and between integration and success.

In Clinton, Mississippi, a suburb of Jackson, the public schools are 53 percent black and 39 percent white. In response to a desegregation order, the district reconfigured its schools to provide a single school for kindergarten and first grade, another for second and third grade, and so on. The plan allows the district's students to attend school together, ensuring that each school reflects the district's overall racial and socioeconomic makeup. Over the years, even as poverty has increased in the district, the schools have continued to serve both black and white students well. Though there's still a gap in performance between the two groups, Clinton is the only majority-black school district in Mississippi that gets an A on the state's rating system.

Erica Frankenberg, an education professor at Pennsylvania State University, says that integration has a proven track record, but that the fight for securing and maintaining integrated schools has taken a toll even on some of its fiercest proponents.

"You can understand why even some civil-rights lawyers say, 'I'm tired of fighting—I just want the best I can get for the students here,'" Frankenberg says. "But in a lot of these cases, if different decisions would have been made and if the courts had intervened 20 or 30 years ago, the demographics of the schools would have been different. The political lift would have been lighter."

Amy Berman started at the Justice Department in 2002 and spent nine years working on school-desegregation cases under the administrations of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama. After Bush took office, the department began a comprehensive review of its 430 remaining school-desegregation cases, planning to lift orders in as many districts as possible. During that period, federal courts closed out almost 200 cases, including in places like Vestavia Hills, Alabama, where the immediate impact was a return to segregated schools after the district dropped the black neighborhood it had been forced to serve. According to Berman, the approach was starkly different under Obama. While she says the career attorneys working under both administrations often fought vigorously against resegregation, Berman admits that there was a shift in policy under Obama. Rather than helping the districts that requested to dissolve their cases, the Obama administration imposed consent decrees, which required these districts to lay out a plan to address, under court supervision, the lingering disparities between black and white students. This summer, the Justice Department under President Trump reversed course from the Obama administration's policy and said that it would allow Franklin County, Mississippi, to end its court supervision without a consent decree.

With Trump in office, it's probably only a matter of time before the number of federal desegregation orders drops again, possibly to zero. Trump's team is opposed to using consent decrees to keep the pressure on school districts and make sure they've fulfilled their promise to erase the legacy of Jim Crow, arguing that the courts and the Justice Department need to get out of these local matters. Berman and other civil-rights lawyers say they've already heard rumors of districts gearing up to ask the courts to lift their orders, assuming the Trump administration won't fight them.

THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

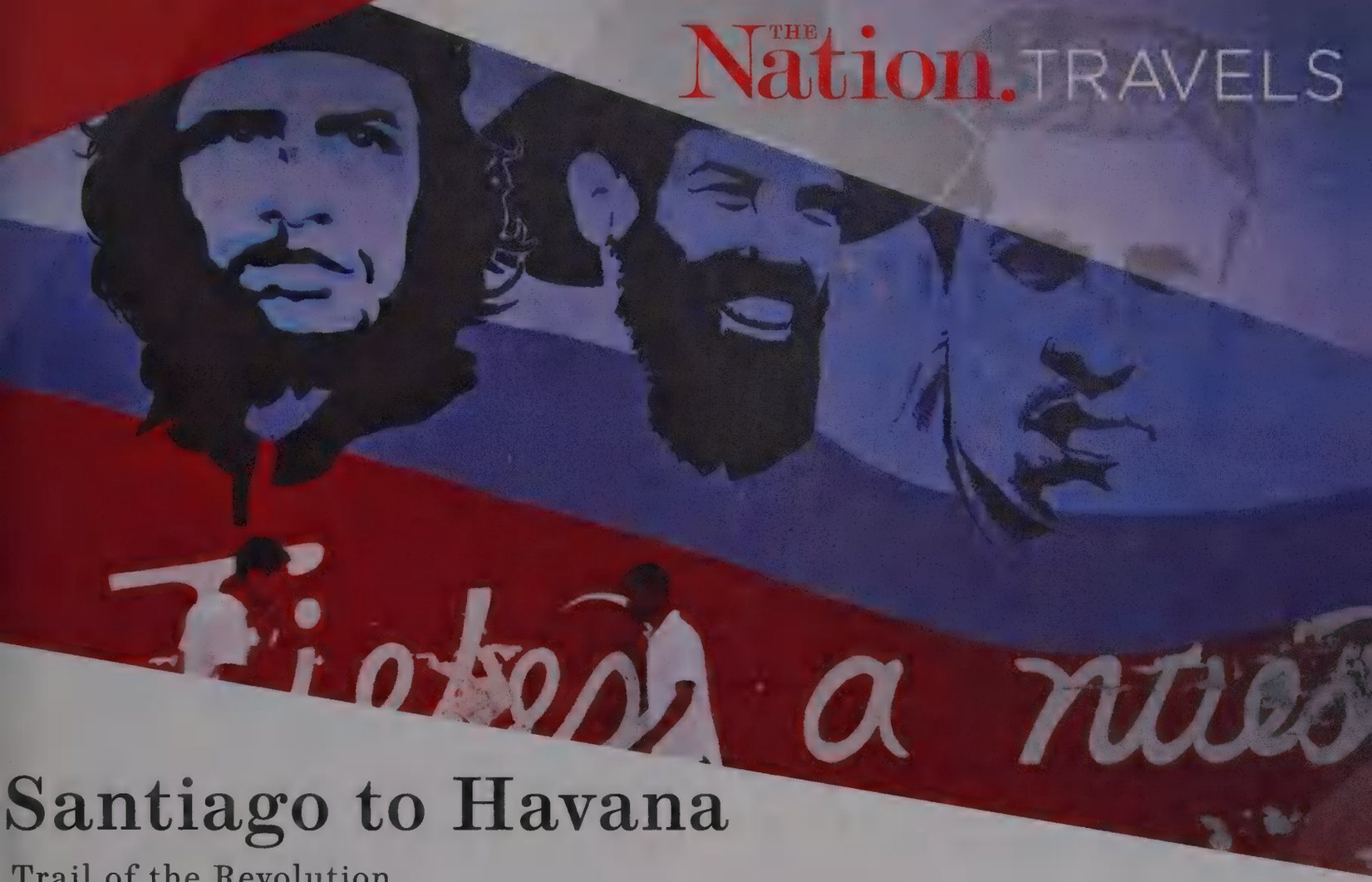
"You can understand why even some civil-rights lawyers say, 'I'm tired of fighting.'"

—Erica Frankenberg, education professor at Pennsylvania State University

Meanwhile, the resegregation of the South could soon accelerate. Both Alabama and Mississippi, which together are home to nearly half of the remaining cases, have recently passed laws allowing for charter schools. Frankenberg and other researchers have found that charters tend to increase segregation. The case of Mitchell County, Georgia, is a cautionary tale. In the late 1990s, a group of white residents in Mitchell County used Georgia's nascent charter law to start a new school, which opened in 2000. Once that happened, white families peeled off from the nearly all-black district schools to which they were zoned and enrolled at the Baconton Community Charter School. The federal court overseeing Mitchell County's still-active school-desegregation order didn't interfere. While diversity has increased significantly at Baconton since then, the charter school is still 74 percent white, while the district schools are only 8 percent white. "We have 26 percent students of color, and we do have a plan in place to attract more students of color," said Baconton assistant principal Mary Sullivan in an e-mail.

The final retreat of the federal government from its responsibility to enforce the *Brown* decision will send a clear message to places like Gardendale. "If you can create a school system with racially inspired motivations, there is nothing stopping the return of segregation," says U.W. Clemon, the civil-rights attorney and former judge.

Leslie Williams isn't optimistic. She's enrolling her second child at the middle school in Gardendale this fall, but she knows the rug could be pulled out from under her at any time. "From education to law enforcement, everything is a struggle for black families," Williams says on a steamy summer afternoon as she weighs her options. "We have to teach our kids to play a game that is set up against them from the beginning." ■



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(continued from page 2)

suspect that his time was running out.

When it came to election night, one of his closest advisers recalled that "there was a tremendous moment of elation when the exit poll was announced because it became apparent that the campaign had achieved the most stunning turnaround in public opinion in seven weeks." The operative word there is "stunning": Clearly, Corbyn and his people were as surprised as everyone else.

Three months on, the movement that Corbyn catalyzed has every right to rejoice in its advances, but the conversation now has to turn to the millions of voters it somehow has to take with it, and to the uncertainty of the wider political environment. In that context, it is not the job of writers and thinkers on the left to predict the future, but rather to ask awkward questions and portray difficult realities. Although Corbyn has answered an urgent need for political hope and an alternative to the free-market failures of the last 40 years, winning power in such uncertain times—let alone governing—will be a massive challenge. Success will require all the things that Solomon Hughes outlines, but also a couple that he perhaps overlooks: candor and critical thinking.

John Harris
FROME, SOMERSET, U.K.

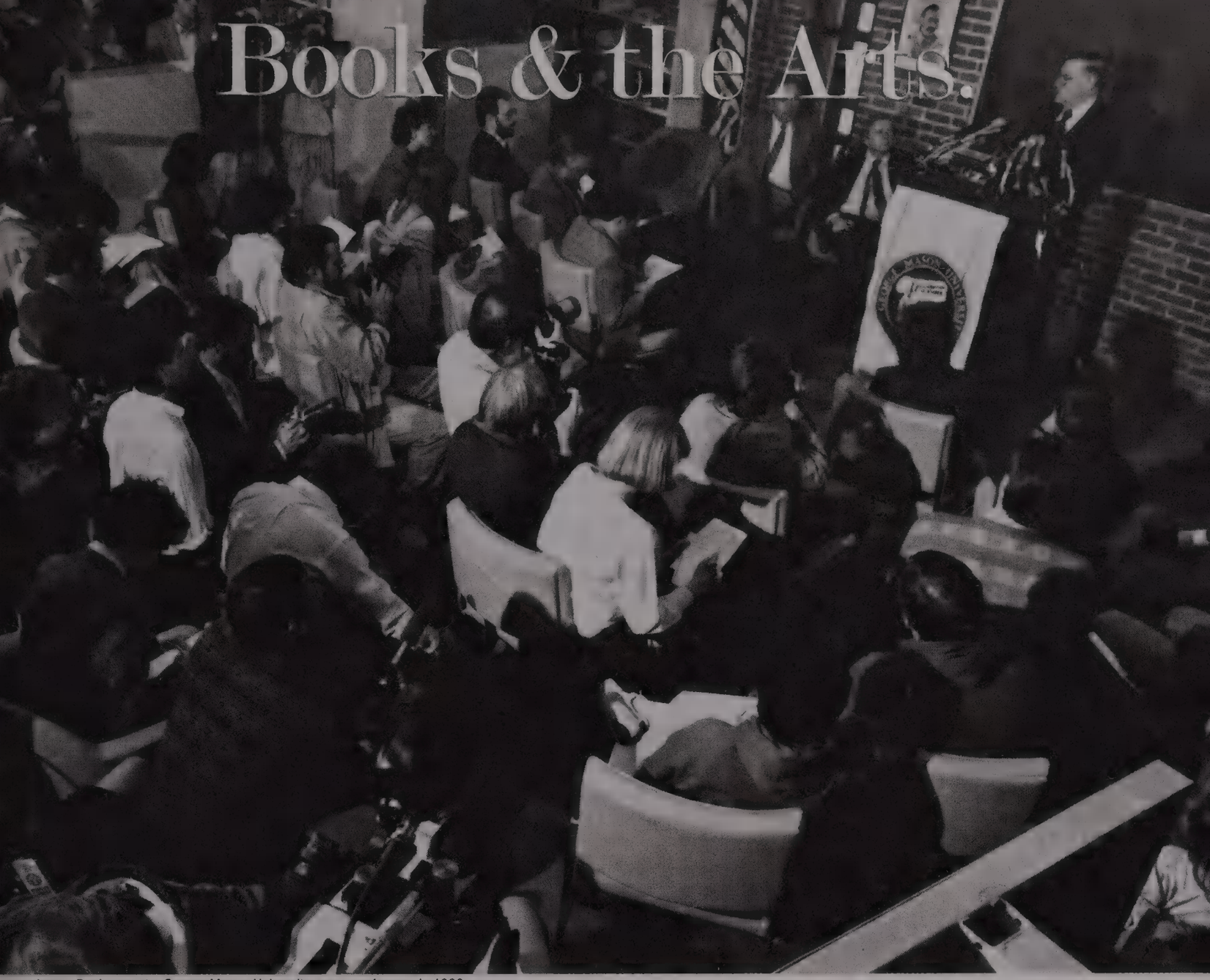
City vs. Country

I live in rural Wisconsin because I love the land, water, and clean air, as do the farmers, fishers, hunters, and environmentalists who call this place home. Yet the state and federal government fail to provide money in ways that benefit rural people, a failing that helped a faux populist take the state. Sarah Jones compassionately articulates this urban/rural divide in her article "In La Follette Territory" [Aug. 14/21]. In the same issue, Rebecca Clarren ["Left Behind"] decries the underfunded public schools for primarily Native and disadvantaged students. Although she's writing about Oregon, the same critique applies to Wisconsin.

While defunding K–12 public education and giving taxpayer money to for-profit schools, Governor Scott Walker broke the unions, took more than $300 million out of the University of Wisconsin system, and put a similar amount into building another sports arena in Milwaukee—more money going to urban populations. Add in the frac-sand mining in western Wisconsin that farmers blame (correctly) for polluting our water, air, and land. We also suffer from severe and persistent flooding that gets little or no remedy. Now Walker wants Foxconn to build a plant near Milwaukee that taxpayers would have to support with millions of dollars. All of these issues resonate with rural voters: We want excellent schools, decently paid teachers, clean air, clean water, well-maintained recreation land, work that keeps the land healthy, jobs that support local families, and fair pay for local workers to fix our roads and bridges.

There is a strong progressive movement in Wisconsin, including the largest farmer-owned collective of organic producers in the United States, many local food co-ops, alternative schools, and a vibrant arts scene. But many Wisconsinites did not vote—not out of apathy, but out of a shared disgust with our rural neighbors over the corporatist agenda that is fouling the earth. We all want respect and fair play.

Kathleen Tigerman
PLATTEVILLE, WIS.



James Buchanan at a George Mason University press conference in 1986.

MONT PELERIN IN VIRGINIA

A new book on James Buchanan and public-choice theory explores the Southern roots of the free-market right

by KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

In the spring of 1972, a small group of thinkers met at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York City to discuss the role of "altruism and morality" in shaping social life. Among them was James Buchanan, an economist then teaching at Virginia Tech, who was best known as one of the founders of "public choice" theory—a branch of economic thought that sought to apply the methodology of economics to political decision-making.

At the conference, Buchanan delivered a paper on the theme of what he termed the "Samaritan's dilemma." Using the framework of game theory, he argued that most people had a strong incentive, in the short term, to extend charity to others. There was a definite loss of "utility" associated with denying help to someone who needed it. But the problem was that this innate longing to be charitable opened up the possibility that "parasites" would take advantage. To counter it, people would need to sacrifice their immediate utility for long-term well-being—just as a mother might have to spank her child

Democracy in Chains
The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America
By Nancy MacLean
Viking. 368 pp. $28

Kim Phillips-Fein is the author of Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal *and* Fear City: The New York City Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of the Age of Austerity.

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(an example Buchanan used) in order to encourage good behavior in the long term. "A species that increasingly behaves so as to encourage more and more of its own members to live parasitically off and/or deliberately exploit its producers faces self-destruction at some point in time," Buchanan concluded. In the context of the early 1970s—shortly after the heyday of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty programs and the welfare-rights movement—there could be little mystery about the political significance of Buchanan's arguments. The implication of his argument was clear: For the sake of the few, the American welfare state had ended up putting the whole in jeopardy.

Buchanan never achieved the fame of Milton Friedman, who made popularizing free-market ideas via his PBS show *Free to Choose* and his columns in *Newsweek* his life's mission, nor has he ever received the same amount of attention as Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises in historical accounts of the free-market right in America. But in *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America*, Nancy MacLean tries to provide a critical history of the role of Buchanan's ideas in the modern conservative movement. MacLean asserts that his thinking—and especially his caustic attitude toward the state and government—became a critical source of inspiration for several generations of conservative thinkers and activists. Using Buchanan's papers, she also seeks to excavate his relationship to Charles Koch, one of the Wichita, Kansas–based oil billionaires whose financial contributions have been integral to building the intellectual infrastructure for libertarianism.

Democracy in Chains has already become the object of much controversy. A variety of libertarians and political philosophers—many, though not all, working in Buchanan's tradition—have attacked the book, arguing that MacLean has read Buchanan's work (and their own) out of context, distorted quotes, overreached on the available evidence, and failed to grapple adequately with Buchanan's ideas. They also contend that her vision of Buchanan is Manichaean and melodramatic, and that her assertion that the many Koch-funded organizations comprise a "fifth column" bent on undoing majority rule is, at the least, unfair. Meanwhile, liberal and left-leaning commentators have offered mixed reviews, with some, like political scientists Steven Teles and Henry Farrell, arguing that MacLean doesn't do enough to engage with the substance of public-choice theory, and others, like historians Bethany Moreton and Colin Gordon, have praised MacLean's hard-hitting analysis of the libertarian right's fundamental hostility to ideas about majority rule. (I should say here that MacLean reviewed my first book and we know each other professionally; in fact, because we have participated in conference panels together, my name appears in her acknowledgements.)

Democracy in Chains isn't a perfect book, if such a thing exists, and there are certainly many places one might criticize her argument. Seen as political history, MacLean's suggestion that Buchanan's thought provides, as she puts it, a "master plan" for thinking about the goals of Charles Koch suggests too seamless a connection between the two men, and as intellectual history, the book also could have done much more to clarify Buchanan's ideas and public-choice theory for a general readership, as well as to give some sense of why it appeals to so many, a point made by Teles and Farrell.

But despite its flaws, MacLean's book makes two important interventions in the literature on the rise of the right. The first is that, by showing the various points of contact between free-market intellectuals and those organizing in opposition to the civil-rights movement, *Democracy in Chains* brings the Southern context of libertarian ideas to the forefront. Going back to George Nash's 1976 intellectual history of American conservatism, most treatments of right-wing thinkers in the 1940s and '50s say little about the opposition to desegregation, giving the impression that it was an unsavory product of shadowy grassroots groups like the Ku Klux Klan that has little to do with libertarian thought. But MacLean's book shows how difficult it is to separate race from the history of the free-market right. She highlights how the work of thinkers like Buchanan echoed common arguments being made by anti-integration journalists and legislators and how, in turn, those opponents of civil rights then used his and other libertarian arguments to further their cause. Where other intellectual historians of the right have focused on the intent of the thinkers and the content of their work, MacLean's emphasis is on how Buchanan's ideas were used. This leads her to tell a story about the history of free-market conservatism that is very different from what libertarians tell themselves, which is likely one reason that her book has become such a lightning rod for the right.

Her book's second contribution is in some ways more complex: It is a question and a provocation more than an answer. By exploring the role played by the Kochs and others in financing various centers of intellectual and political activity, *Democracy in Chains* raises the question of how historians should approach and write about right-wing efforts to reshape political ideas. How can historians write about business activists such as the Kochs without overstating their influence? They may have believed they had a "master plan," but how can we offer accounts of them without taking them at their word and making them appear all-powerful?

The first half of *Democracy in Chains* deals with Buchanan's biography and the development of his career at the moment when "massive resistance" in the South was at its height. Buchanan grew up in small-town Tennessee, the grandson of a man who had been governor during the Populist era. Although his family was hardly well-to-do, they were not impoverished: The Buchanans were attended (at least when James was born) by an African-American live-in servant, and their farm was worked by a family of black sharecroppers. Intellectually ambitious, Buchanan attended a local teachers college before moving on to the University of Tennessee for his masters and then the University of Chicago for his PhD, where he was influenced by Frank Knight and Milton Friedman (though he flatly disliked Friedman for the haughty superiority with which he treated students).

Shortly after his graduation from Chicago, Buchanan was hired by the economics department at the University of Virginia. He arrived there in 1956. It was, at the time, an all-male institution (women were not admitted to UVA until 1970) and almost all-white—the first black student came to the university's law school in 1950 and withdrew after one year. The state as a whole was not much more egalitarian. Virginia in the mid-1950s was not only highly segregated but still tightly controlled by the Democratic Party, under the leadership of its longtime US senator, Harry F. Byrd. The Byrd Organization, as the Democratic machine in Virginia was known, recognized that enfranchising African Americans would mean the end of its own power, and so it had political as well as racist motives to fight the end of Jim Crow. As political scientist V.O. Key put it in his famous study of Southern politics, "Of all the American states, Virginia can lay claim to the most thorough control by an oligarchy."

In 1956, the battle over integration was at its peak. High-school students from Prince Edward County, a district in central Virginia, had been among the plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education*—the only one of the five cases that *Brown* comprised to have origi-

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nated with students (they had organized a school strike over unequal facilities, and then agreed to work with the NAACP to challenge segregation more generally). Following the Supreme Court's decision, the State Legislature passed a law stating that the governor had the right to close any school district that attempted to integrate. Tax-funded "tuition grants" for private schools would be given to families instead—effectively, a subsidy for the private "segregation academies" that were springing up throughout the South. The Legislature's intransigence was buttressed by the writings of thinkers like James J. Kilpatrick, the editor of *The Richmond News Leader*, who argued in his 1957 book *The Sovereign States* that not just *Brown*, but the entire legal and constitutional infrastructure that supported central pieces of the New Deal—including Social Security, the federal minimum wage, and the National Labor Relations Act affirming the right to form unions—represented a breach of the Constitution that Virginia should resist.

From his position at the University of Virginia, Buchanan weighed in on the noisy debate over integration. Along with another UVA colleague hired at the same time, he wrote a report for the State Legislature making the case for ending the "monopoly" of "state-run schools" and replacing it with a system in which any parent who wanted to send a child to private school could do so with a tax-subsidized voucher. In this way, "every parent could cast his vote in the [educational] marketplace and have it count." So that public schools didn't enjoy an unfair advantage, Buchanan and his colleague suggested that the state should sell off its equipment and resources to private operators. (The economists shared a draft of their report with Milton Friedman, who said he didn't think it went far enough—for example, parents should bear the full cost of their offspring's education, Friedman argued, to ensure they had "the appropriate number of children.")

In April 1959, the Virginia Legislature voted on whether counties could choose to abandon public education altogether and replace it with a "scholarship" approach; shortly before the vote, Buchanan's report was published in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. But the measure did not pass, losing by a margin of 53–45; most legislators recognized that their constituents wouldn't be happy to see public schools disappear. Still, in September of 1959, Prince Edward County simply closed all of its public schools, for white and black children alike. Nor did the Legislature order the county to reopen its schools, which would remain padlocked for the next five years, until the closure was ruled unconstitutional.

MacLean doesn't show (or seek to show) that Buchanan himself held racist views, nor does she cite his extensive correspondence with Kilpatrick or other advocates of segregation. But her reconstruction of this early episode in Buchanan's career, she believes, demonstrates his willingness to work with the forces eager to find an alternative to integration, and it also shows the confluence between his vision of public schools as a government "monopoly" on education and those who wanted to found all-white private schools in Virginia. Perhaps of greater importance to MacLean, it offers us a critical historical context for interpreting Buchanan's larger intellectual project and, in particular, his skepticism toward the state. The emergence of libertarianism in America, MacLean wants to show, had close connections to the resurgence of right-wing segregationism in the 1950s and '60s.

In 1962, only a few years after the battle over the Virginia schools, Buchanan and his colleague Gordon Tullock published *The Calculus of Consent*, the founding text of public-choice economics. In it, they sought to bring the insights of economics—especially the methodology that takes the utility-maximizing individual as its starting point—to bear on politics. Most interpretations of the state and of government, they argued, were "grounded on the implicit assumption that the representative individual seeks not to maximize his own utility, but to find the 'public interest' or 'common good.'" In contrast, they suggested that a clear-eyed, unsentimental analysis focused on "individualism" and on self-interest as key motivators would prove far more capable of explaining political outcomes.

The mode of analysis embodied by public-choice theory caught fire in the discipline. Some were drawn to the frisson of using economic thought to understand politics. Others appreciated the ironies and paradoxical outcomes it exposed: how its stance of realism and cool reason could allow an economist to dissolve the fuzzy clichés of the "public good."

The shift that it made—away from totalizing concepts of the state, to focus instead on the self-interested individual as the starting point of analysis—was echoed in other works of social science written in the era by liberals as well as conservatives: most notably, John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, which took the opposite position about the desirability of the welfare state. Still, regardless of Buchanan and Tullock's intentions, the attack on public goods and institutions could not help but resonate, in the Southern context, with the long-standing antipathy toward any institutions capable of challenging the racial hierarchies that structured social life in the region. As MacLean puts it, "The driving analysis was less original in its basic convictions than later reviewers imagined. It was midcentury Virginia wine with a Mont Pelerin label."

Koch only comes into the book in its second half, as MacLean traces Buchanan's participation in the developing world of the libertarian right. By the mid-1960s, the UVA administration began to grow anxious about his influence. Criticism circulated within the university that the economics department was "too far to the right," and that "absolute doctrinalism breeds absolute authoritarianism absolutely." Someone at the top of the UVA administration commented that there was no one in the department "to the left of the John Birch Society." When Tullock (whose degree was actually in law rather than economics) failed to be promoted to full professor, Buchanan threatened to leave UVA in protest. The university president stood his ground. Buchanan opted to exit, and he headed west for the University of California at Los Angeles.

UCLA turned out to be an even less accommodating home for a Southern economist. The wave of student-led protests over civil rights and against the escalating war in Vietnam swept through the UCLA campus in the late 1960s. Buchanan would go on to co-author a brief polemic about the state of affairs in American universities, titled *Academia in Anarchy*, with Nicos Devletoglou. The main thrust of their argument: Free or cheap tuition gave students an incentive to take advantage of their universities.

Never at home on the West Coast, Buchanan returned to the South in 1969, this time to Virginia Tech—an institution with little national reputation and far more modest resources at the time. From his new post, Buchanan renewed his attempts to build an intellectual movement—recruiting donors, bringing together small groups of like-minded thinkers, discussing the need to "create, support and activate an effective counterintelligentsia" to reshape "the way people think about government" (as he put it at one small gathering at his country cabin).

By the early 1970s, Buchanan wasn't alone

in these efforts; many on the right were discouraged and frightened by the emergence of the New Left, and MacLean describes the wide array of conservative political and intellectual organizations that developed in this period, including the Institute for Contemporary Studies in California; the Law and Economics Center at the University of Miami; the Liberty Fund, which ran annual summer conferences promoting the work of younger scholars; and the Institute for Humane Studies, an intellectual organization that offered seminars and conferences on free-market ideas. Through this growing constellation of libertarian academic organizations, Buchanan ends up meeting the other main character of *Democracy in Chains*: Charles Koch. Koch's first major financial contributions went to the Center for Independent Education, a group promoting voucher programs and private schools in Kansas. The two men connected quickly: After meeting Buchanan, Koch invited him to be the first dinner speaker at the newly formed Charles Koch Foundation.

As the 1970s wore on, the relations between Buchanan and his department chair at Virginia Tech worsened. In 1983, after a stint in Chile (where Buchanan advised Gen. Augusto Pinochet on the Chilean Constitution, a move he seems never to have regretted), Buchanan moved on to George Mason University. Once again, he chose a less prominent public institution to which he promised to bring new funds through his connections with conservative circles. In these years, Buchanan's reputation was on the rise—he won the Nobel Prize in 1986—but he was largely immune to the euphoria that swept the right during the early years of Ronald Reagan's presidency. Speaking at a Mont Pelerin Society meeting in Chile in November 1981, Buchanan warned: "We should not be lulled to sleep by temporary electoral victories of politicians and parties that share our ideological commitments."

Like Buchanan, Charles Koch was pessimistic about the prospects of American conservatism. Especially after the failure of House Speaker Newt Gingrich's "Contract With America" in 1994, Koch feared that his beloved libertarian movement was under siege by "personality cults" and "ossified by purity tests," and his donations certainly suggested that he wanted to elevate the reputation of public-choice theory. In fact, he would eventually move the Institute for Humane Studies from its base in California to George Mason University, which was rapidly (partly as a result of Buchanan's time there) becoming an epicenter of conservative thought.

The relationship between Buchanan and Koch was not without its own tensions. In the final chapter of her book, MacLean skips forward to the late 1990s, when Koch donated $10 million to George Mason University to support the expansion of the James Buchanan Center. Oddly, this culmination of their partnership seems to have put the two at odds. A year after Koch's grant to GMU, Wendy Lee Gramm (an economist and the wife of Senator Phil Gramm) wrote a fund-raising letter to potential donors promoting the Buchanan Center on the grounds that its close proximity to Washington, DC, meant that it was "uniquely positioned to advance freedom… to the very people who'll make a difference." She mentioned, in particular, House majority leader Dick Armey's efforts to cut personal, corporate, and capital-gains taxes.

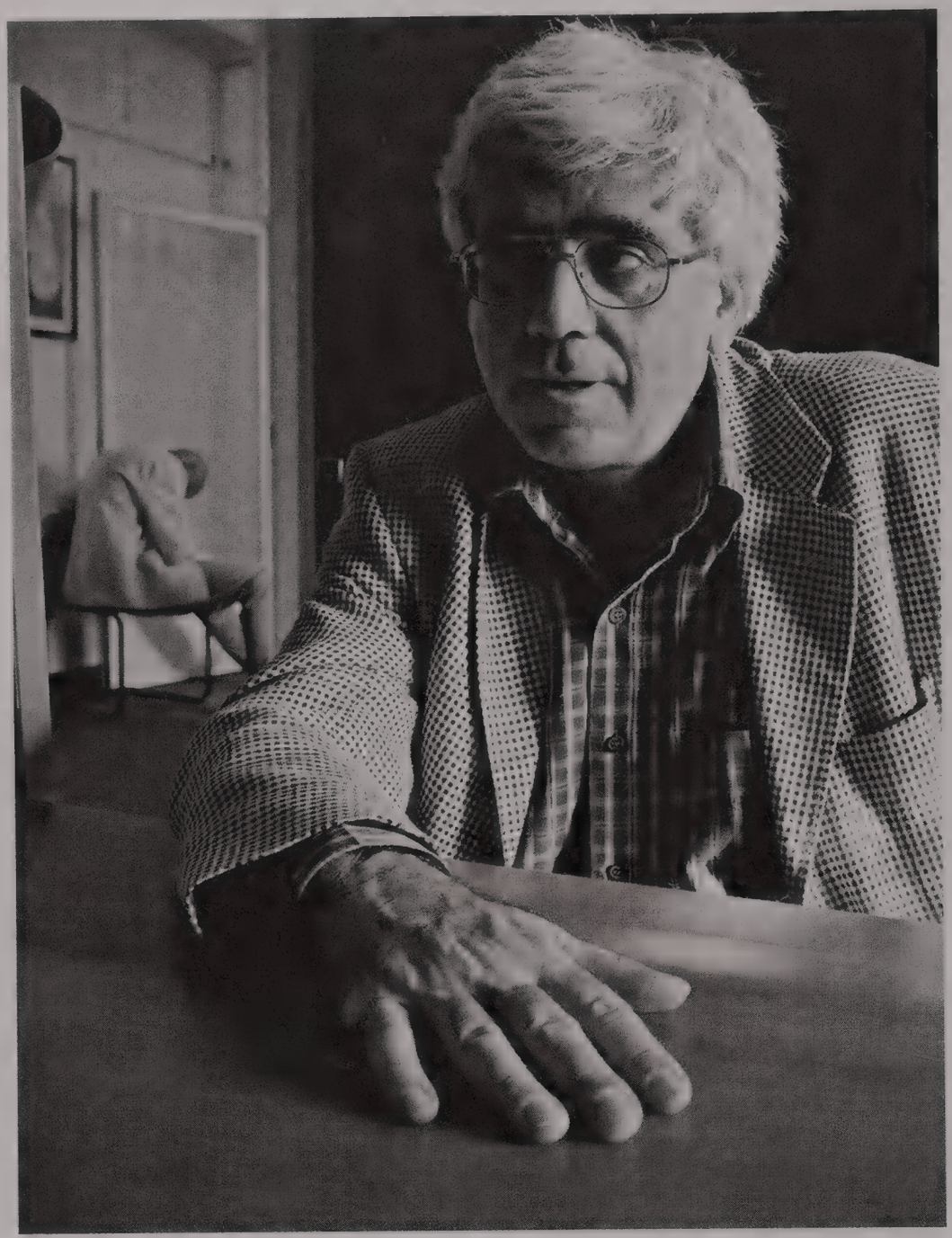
Buchanan, who hadn't been told about the fund-raising letter, became anxious that its explicitly political nature might violate the center's tax-exempt status, and he complained to one colleague that it "amounts to exploitation of me" and verges on "fraud." Buchanan may have also been worried that the intellectual center that bore his name was being conscripted into a narrowly partisan battle: "Quite frankly," he added, "I am 'pissed off,'" and he warned the GMU administration that the people running the center included "no-one with academic standing." In part because of this experience, Buchanan seems to have withdrawn from the center's active life. He died in 2013, and MacLean notes, Charles Koch didn't attend his memorial service.

Although this runs counter to one of the arguments in her book, MacLean also delineates some of the limits of Koch's funding efforts. While he may have wanted to build an intellectual movement, Koch wound up alienating the very thinkers like Buchanan who were drawn to the cause but grew frustrated by Koch's involvement. MacLean quotes with relish the various documents, letters, and speeches in which Buchanan outlined his desire to build a "Third Century" movement that would be able to reverse the trend toward ever-larger governments that he found so alarming. While such language indeed suggests the political energy and sense of momentous self-importance that could make a gathering of economists in the mountains feel like a world-historic event, *Democracy in Chains* also shows (perhaps inadvertently) how difficult it was to translate these grand sentiments into political or even intellectual change—despite the involvement of powerful businessmen like Koch and their vast resources, or ambitious academics like Buchanan, who repeatedly tapped into this network over the course of his career.

Certainly, by their standards, both Koch and Buchanan have accomplished much—weakening unions, attacking regulations, building organizations to push their policies at the state level—and their relentless denigration of collective action and veneration of the market's wisdom have helped to shape the political climate that enabled Donald Trump's victory. Yet today, the movement they helped build is being consumed by infighting; its policy proposals remain as unpopular as ever; and its agenda is now improbably linked to a president who came to power with cynical promises to not cut the entitlement programs (like Social Security) that the Koch brothers have long hated.

Where political sentiments have changed, it's far from clear that the Kochs and their money, or Buchanan and his ideas, are solely or even primarily responsible. Take the issue of charter schools and vouchers, for example. While the current prominence of the idea of an alternative to public education grew out of the work of thinkers like Buchanan and Friedman and the financial activism of the Koch brothers—and while it also has its roots, as MacLean shows, in the "segregation academies" that promised white families a "choice" about how to spend their education dollars—the charter-school movement can also trace part of its lineage to the support of United Federation of Teachers leader Albert Shanker and many intellectuals associated with the Democratic Leadership Council. No doubt there has been a real transformation of attitudes toward public education and teachers' unions, but the Kochs are only one part of this, not the whole story.

Obviously the Kochs, Buchanan, and their ilk have played a significant role in helping influence elections and policy-making. Their pools of money and their ideas have transformed the political terrain in countless ways. Writing about their activism, as MacLean does in her timely and thought-provoking book, is one way to demystify and contest it. But there is also a danger in charting the rise of the right as though it has simply unfolded from a "stealth plan" to political reality: It can make it seem almost impossible to resist, and history doesn't work that way—not even for the Kochs. ■



Sari Nusseibeh.

OUR BETTER NATURES

In his new book, Sari Nusseibeh tracks the vicissitudes of reason in Islamic thought

by CHRISTOPHER DE BELLAIGUE

Abie Nathan was an Iranian-born Jew of Yemeni extraction who was educated in British India, flew for the Royal Air Force, bombed Galilee villages and the Egyptian Army on behalf of his adopted Israel during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and went on to introduce Israelis to the pleasures of the hamburger through his Tel Aviv restaurant, the California. In 1966, having made it his mission to end the hostility between Israel and its Arab neighbors, he flew a biplane over enemy Egyptian territory and landed at Port Said; there, he requested an audience with President Gamal Abdel Nasser and was politely deported. In 1973, Nathan founded an offshore radio station, the Voice of Peace, that broadcast from a ship "somewhere in the Mediterranean" in English, French, Hebrew, and Arabic to nearly 30 million listeners. Although twice jailed for having unauthorized contact with the enemy (including a meeting with Yasir Arafat), Nathan was unrepentant, arguing that "it will be impossible to heal the wounds, whether among the Arabs or the Jews, unless we decide to sit with each other." In 1993, after the Oslo Accords were signed, he shut down the Voice of Peace, believing that his work was finally done.

The Story of Reason in Islam
By Sari Nusseibeh
Stanford University Press. 288 pp. $29.95

If Nathan's effect on the Arab-Israeli conflict was immaterial, fleeting, and impossible to measure, and if his compatriots looked on him as something between a joker and a knave, his example has nonetheless been significant to the Palestinian philosopher and sometime PLO official Sari Nusseibeh, who wrote about him in his 2011 book *What Is a Palestinian State Worth?* Nusseibeh has also written about another admirable figure who persisted in seeing the humanity of his adversary: Izzeldin Abuelaish, a Harvard-educated Palestinian doctor who lost three daughters to Israeli shells during the obliteration of Gaza in 2008–9, but who, like Nathan, continued to insist that Israelis and Palestinians needed to teach each other love and respect. Here was "a modern-day Job," in the words of one journalist, who "continues to speak the language of peace."

The better natures of Nathan and Abuelaish seem to flow into a course that has been cut by human reason; they exhibit what Nusseibeh calls a unified, or "conjunctive," account of the way we behave. In opposition to the classical dialectic that pits the *physis*, the brutal and atavistic side of behavior, against the *nomos*, or reason-based laws, in Nusseibeh's telling human conduct is informed by a single compound of gut and nous.

It's easy to see how people whose political positions were formed by a yearning to reconcile the superficially irreconcilable would attract the attention of this eminently civilized member of the old Jerusalem aristocracy (a Nusseibeh has held the keys to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on and off since the Arab conquest of Jerusalem in 637). It's also easy to see how they might be attractive to a philosopher and educator who has spent a long and ambivalently pursued public career with his finger jammed painfully in a dyke behind which the hate has accumulated. A man who has given his life to education and philosophi-

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cal contemplation, on the one hand, and to the Palestinian cause whose essential justice has often been tainted by peculation and Islamist militancy, on the other, and who moves between churning East Jerusalem and the millponds of Harvard, Nusseibeh is someone who knows all about contrasts and contradictions.

In 2001, during a brief stint as Arafat's representative in Jerusalem, Nusseibeh tried to smother the biggest contradiction of them all when he announced to a packed hall at the Hebrew University that Israelis and Palestinians were not enemies at all, but rather strategic allies: "Our mutual interest that the future be better than the present," he wrote later, "creates an objective alliance between us."

Arafat valued Nusseibeh for his moderation, international reputation, and contacts among Israeli peace activists. But he also kept him at arm's length for the same reasons. In the early 2000s, during the second intifada, Nusseibeh devised a peace plan with a former Shin Bet chief, Ami Ayalon, that garnered support from many ordinary people on both sides. But a darker vision uniting the Israeli right and Palestinian militants around their opposition to coexistence defeated these hopeful moves—a defeat made manifest by Ariel Sharon's security fence through the West Bank, though a protest movement organized by Nusseibeh prevented it from bisecting the campus of Al-Quds University, whose president he'd become in 1995.

The growing militancy of young Palestinians and the increasing political dominance enjoyed by the Israeli right were never going to favor the philosopher. His presidency of Al-Quds ended in 2014, when he was forced to step down after an on-campus show of strength by Hamas and Islamic Jihad upset the university's American partner, Brandeis. Nusseibeh chose not to condemn the militants' actions; Brandeis took umbrage; and his retirement was announced shortly afterward. These days, still shuttling between the West and Palestine at age 68, Nusseibeh seems to have embraced once more the life of contemplation, philosophy, and Islamic thought from which, one suspects, a vivid sense of noblesse oblige wrested him in the first place.

Along with studying the most enduring political dispute in the modern Middle East—this fall marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration—Nusseibeh has spent much time mulling over what many critics of Islam consider to be the religion's besetting flaw: its antipathy to reason, which has, so the argument goes, prevented it from accommodating the ideas of individualism, empirical knowledge, and liberation from dogma that constitute modernity.

In an Islamic context, the word "reason" is often employed as a sarcastic counterpoint to the religion itself, and the trope of Islamic unreason—or rage, or a furious inferiority complex—has helped sustain the "clash of civilizations" theories that have been given such a boost by the growth of terrorism in the Middle East and Europe and the answering clarion of Donald Trump, Geert Wilders, Marine Le Pen, and others. But if reason and Islam were shown to be long-standing friends, even to inhere naturally in each other, this might be more significant than a strategic alliance between, say, the Palestinians and Israelis. This, at least, is what Nusseibeh promises in his new book, *The Story of Reason in Islam*.

A common view of Islamic reason in the West holds that while questions over free will and the Quran's eternal nature encouraged a certain amount of speculation among early Muslims, it was only after the assimilation of Western thought—first Greek thought in Alexandria, which flourished as a center of Neoplatonism even after it fell to Arab conquest, and later through the translation of Greek works into Arabic—that Islamic thought began to develop its own rationalist tradition. This, in turn, led to the achievements in mathematics, astronomy, and chemistry that gave shape to the golden age of Muslim intellectual achievement under the Abbasid Empire, a cultural superpower dominant from Iberia to China.

But not all Western scholars subscribed to this backhanded account of Islamic rationalism, which depicts reason as extrinsic to the Islamic tradition; some, like the 19th-century French Orientalist Ernest Renan, dismissed "Islamic science and philosophy" as "but a petty translation of Greek science and philosophy." *Falsafa*, the Arabic word for the discipline that entered the Abbasid world with translations of Galen, Plato, and Ptolemy, was painfully foreign in origin, and it wouldn't be until Avicenna in the 11th century that the Arabic language fully indigenized Greek and Hellenistic philosophical concepts. Sari Nusseibeh's story of Islamic rationalism makes the case that reason didn't in fact enter Islam through *falsafa*, but through *kalam*, a discipline—probably influenced by Christian theology—that subjected the Quran to discussion and analysis in everyday Arabic.

While relying on many of the same philosophical and critical techniques as Christian theology, *kalam* was also much more worldly than *falsafa*. As Nusseibeh writes concerning the endeavors of one Hasan al-Basri (642–728), who is generally identified as the first exponent of *kalam*: "This was no 'ivory-tower' debate about academic subjects such as justice, free will and responsibility based on books picked up from the library. It directly affected peoples' lives.... Because [Basri] understood the Qur'an as the intellectual space in which rational enquiry can proceed freely."

The Quran is a famously allusive, repetitive, contradictory text, convincing many—among them Thomas Carlyle, who famously described it as a "wearisome confused jumble"—that it could never serve as the forum for an exercise of rational inquiry. In the most surprising and dramatic assertion of his book, however, Nusseibeh counters that "had it not been for the Prophet"—and, by implication, the Quran—"reason, rooted in efforts to understand and explain this faith, would not have flourished" in the Middle East. In fact, for Nusseibeh, it is precisely the Quran's difficult and poetic style that makes it "a progenitor of reason," because only reason can aid us in understanding it. This explains the astonishing, liberating force of the Quran, a poetic work that "possessed a universal scope and rang forth on a scale without precedent." The words of the Prophet "elevated the spirit to unparalleled heights: reason in Islam was born."

Thus, in a lyrical and romantic vein, Nusseibeh opens his story of how the Islamic world began to use rational methods to deal with the Quran and its conundrums. Over some 230 closely argued pages, he describes the fluctuating fortunes of reason, from the ninth-century Mutazilites, who championed free will, to the philosopher Alfarabi, Baghdad's Montesquieu (he elaborated an early theory of nationhood), and on to Avicenna, who in his masterpiece, *Al-Shifa* ("The Healing"), reconciled Islamic revelation and classical knowledge.

Nusseibeh also includes a dazzling list of intellectual freelancers in his compact book, from the astronomer al-Haytham in Fatimid Cairo to the polymath al-Biruni 4,000 miles away in Bukhara (where he met Avicenna) and al-Maarri, a freethinking Syrian who held that all religions and prophets were false—and got away with it (until 2013, that is, when his statue was beheaded by jihadists).

As the medieval period wore on, however, the widening schism between Sunnis and Shiites, combined with external shocks like the Crusades, dented the faith of Muslims in their cultural supremacy, and some began to believe that rationalism was the reason for God's displeasure. One of these was Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328), the Muslim theologian and a refugee from the Mongols. Under his influence, philosophy was downgraded in the religious schools and the principle of

taqlid, or emulation of those with religious authority, was privileged over *ijtihad*, the exercise of independent reasoning—which was only acceptable within the bounds of a Sunni orthodoxy that had been exhaustively and rigidly codified, even if among the minority Shias dynamic *ijtihad* has remained a tool of jurisprudence to the present day.

When it comes to explaining the calamitous decline in reason's currency by the 17th and 18th centuries, Nusseibeh doesn't dwell on political events or the triumph of *taqlid*, but on a diminished means of communication in the Muslim world that he dates to the rise of the Ottoman Middle East. The shared milieu of Muslim savants who had exercised their rational faculties in the medieval heyday, he writes, was a vast and varied cultural space "held together by the Arabic language of the Qur'an." But when Ottoman Turkish became the language of power from Hungary to Basra and North Africa in the 16th century, Islam lost its common "factory" for intellectual innovation. The distances between different Islamic thinkers grew, as did those between the Quranic Arabic of the Prophet's time and the various spoken dialects from Morocco to the Persian Gulf. As Nusseibeh concludes gloomily: "Once the lingua franca of reason and science, Arabic ceased to play this role, shrinking back to becoming the 'property' of the Arabs."

Taken altogether, Nusseibeh's account of the decline of reason in Islam is less convincing than his account of its rise. Laying the blame on the Turks obscures the fact that great Islamic schools like al-Azhar in Cairo, dominated by Arabic speakers, also subsided into scholasticism around this time and ceased to produce original ideas. Nusseibeh contrasts the early Arab empires' eager exploitation of paper technology after it was introduced from China in the eighth century with the Ottomans' opposition to movable type. But the hostility to new technologies and ideas was by no means confined to the Ottoman Turks in the 17th and 18th centuries, and neither is it certain that Arabic was the only possible means of expressing rational values in an Islamic context. To take just one example: In the second half of the 16th century, Islamic reason reached a peak in the Mughal court of the Emperor Akbar, whose famous ecumenical debates were conducted in Persian.

Though the shrinking compass of the Arabic language may have played a subsidiary role in the slow decline of Muslim reason, it seems to have been caused by many other historical reversals as well: The homogenization of "official" Sunni Islam under the weight of a massive imperial bureaucracy organized by the Ottomans combined with external shocks such as the Crusades, the *reconquista* of Muslim Spain, and the Mongol invasions to dent Muslims' faith in their own supremacy. This, in turn, engendered a defensive impulse to contract the intellectual world of Islam in the face of the economic, cultural, and military prowess of the West.

The revival of reason in the Islamic world in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and its rejection, once again, by many Muslims in our own time, offers an important coda to Nusseibeh's story. One of the first modern Middle Easterners to express himself on the subject of reason was the prominent Egyptian cleric Abdulrahman al-Jabarti, whose position meant that he had much contact with the French after Napoleon's invasion. For all the military superiority that had allowed the French to sweep imperiously into Cairo, the occupiers' debauchery and ill-advised egalitarianism appalled Jabarti. "France," he sniffed, was a country "without religion but which obeys the judgment of reason." But as Europe's penetration of the Middle East intensified during the 19th century through trade, diplomacy, and missionary activity (and, in Egypt's case, a British occupation in 1882), skeptics of rationalism and scientific reasoning like Jabarti were supplanted by people who saw no discord between reason and religion.

These bureaucrats, scientists, clerics, and journalists were responsible for innovations like theaters of anatomy (in defiance of the Prophet's injunction against cutting up dead bodies), public-hygiene measures such as quarantine, and efforts to raise pitifully low literacy levels. No matter how much Locke and d'Alembert they read (there was a busy translation movement in the 19th century), Islam's modern rationalists also saw themselves as the heirs of Avicenna and Farabi. The Egyptian reformer Rifaa al-Tahtawi went so far as to claim that the most attractive features of Western political thought, such as "liberty" and "equality," had in fact been anticipated by Islam, in the guise of Islamic justice and charity.

Just as Quranic Arabic had released the rational instincts of eighth-century Muslims, so the modern language reflected changing social priorities. The Arabic word *hurriya*, for instance, underwent significant changes in meaning. In Jabarti's time, it signified the state of not being a slave; after the British occupation, it came to denote independence from a colonizing power, before acquiring the connotations of personal liberty that it carries today.

The high-water mark of reason in the modern Middle East came shortly before the First World War, when the region's three most influential countries, Turkey, Egypt, and Iran, underwent rapid social change, from revolutions in favor of parliamentary rule and expanding education—including to women and girls—to the end of harems and slavery. Muhammad Abduh, Egypt's chief mufti from 1899 to 1905, argued that Islam needed to recapture the rationalism that it had displayed at its inception, and in a phrase worthy of Avicenna declared that human beings were "not created to be led by a bridle." The mufti also revived the Mutazilite idea that the Quran was created, not eternal, and therefore was a historical document, open to interpretation according to time and circumstance.

But the old slur that had been directed at philosophers like Farabi—that they were essentially Trojan horses for ideas conceived by foreigners—was eventually hurled at Abduh and his fellow reformers, with the difference that those same foreigners were now taking over the region politically. Egypt had been under British rule since 1882. After the First World War obliterated the Ottoman Empire, Britain and France colonized Mesopotamia and the Levant, while Iran and Turkey only kept the powers at bay by westernizing furiously along Roman lines (Mussolini was the model), not Jeffersonian ones.

This interwar period of colonization and authoritarian modernization is key to understanding why Islamic reason is now in the doldrums. It suffered from its association with the supposedly reasonable West, which was at the same time rapaciously colonizing so much of the Arab and Islamic worlds; atavism was the unintended consequence. In the 1960s, Sayyid Qutb, godfather of modern Islamism, lambasted (the long-dead) Muhammad Abduh for pouring Islam into "the foreign mold of philosophy" and for elevating reason to the same status as revelation. Even defenders of a measured Westernization, such as the secular-minded Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, were rewarded for their political independence with Western hostility and imperial disregard. In 1951, Mossadegh nationalized Iran's British-run oil industry, and two years later the CIA and MI6 toppled him in a coup. The Western depiction of Mossadegh was familiar enough: He was an unhinged Oriental and impervious to reason.

Only an optimist would claim that reason in the Islamic world is more in evidence now

than it was just before the First World War—or even in the 1960s, before the internationalization of jihad, first against the Soviets, then against the United States. Reason, like liberalism, has been a casualty of the pounding and sanguinary course of events, including the catastrophic US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. In this light, it is tempting to read Nusseibeh's stimulating and informative book not simply as a work of intellectual history, but also as a commentary on the vicissitudes of his own public career, which ended in his failure to reshape Palestinian politics. That Nusseibeh recognizes the diminished status of reason in current Islamic thought is shown by his final, rather despairing prognosis: "Given socioeconomic and political conditions in present-day Arab society, a turn of historical proportions is needed to give free rein to the imagination and permit reason to conceive a new course—as happened, so long ago, right at the beginning." ■

Detail from a mural in Wisconsin's Supreme Court by Albert Herter depicting the signing of the US Constitution.

IN EQUILIBRIO

Is the politics of moderation really the best way to avoid tyranny?

by DANIEL SCHLOZMAN

"The predominant passion of all men in power," wrote John Adams in 1787, "whether kings, nobles, or plebeians, is the same; that tyranny will be the effect, whoever are the governors...if uncontrolled by equal laws, made by common consent, and supported, protected, and enforced by three different orders of men in equilibrio."

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Moderates
The Vital Center of American Politics, From the Founding to Today
By David S. Brown
North Carolina University. 352 pp. $34.95

David S. Brown—in a new history of America's "vital center"—thinks Adams is right: Tyranny is around the bend whenever a political system strays far from moderation. Far from serving as transitory players in factional struggles, or as foils for the ideologues who shaped history, those who have constituted the political center represent their own distinct political tradition. They have not only, Brown argues, "constituted a separate force in American politics," but also "one that continues to inform and give substance to our ideological choices."

Brown—the author of a biography of Richard Hofstadter—defines his moderate tradition in a distinct way: His vital centrists do not just seek the space between right and left, but also elevate politics above the interests of any single faction or group. Brown's exemplars aren't just squishes who split the difference. At their best, they're swashbuckling pragmatists cutting through extremists' cant, and in pursuit of America's national interest.

Yet precisely because moderates see the dangers of a society that tips too far in any direction, moderation must assume a mask of tragedy. When confronted with the plural interests and freewheeling populism of mass democracy, moderates find that their vision of faction-less politics breaks down, and they face a choice: If they harness public opinion in service to the common good, they risk demagogy. If they reject popular politics altogether, they retreat into a curdled elitism. If they set the interests of one group over another, they flirt with the very politics they seek to oppose. In the central paradox of Brown's book, moderates offer a modernizing politics, but they're less sure about modernity. And so the story of America's vital center is, in Brown's telling, all at once a celebration of meliorist politics and a narrative of decline and fall.

Brown makes his case for the moderate tradition inductively. Rather than defend it from first principles, or trace centrist voters over time, he focuses on the politicians: in particular, six "moderate coalitions": the Federalists in the Adams mold; the Democratic-Republicans in the Era of Good Feelings; early free-labor Republicans before the Civil War; reform-minded Republicans during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era; moderate GOP-ers from Wendell Willkie to Gerald Ford; and, a final twist, Democrats in the age of Obama—who, by Brown's lights, also fall squarely within the Adams tradition of moderation. To tell this story, Brown strings together lively capsule portraits of John Adams, George Cabot, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Adams, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., before shifting to the two Bushes and the vital centrism of today's Democrats.

As the list makes clear, *Moderates* isn't quite what it seems: Brown isn't doing intel-

lectual and political portraiture for its own sake. His argument is for a certain kind of ideal political temperament that transcends any particular politician, period, or party; it is also for a certain kind of moderation that seeks to elevate politics above petty partisan divisions. Moderation, for Brown, is therefore not only a political tool but a good unto itself, and one that takes on many different manifestations along the way.

To make sense of this variegated tradition, Brown tries to establish three continuities among the moderates he considers. He wants to track the moderate temperament across time; he wants to outline the affinities between the intellectual habits of moderates and their practical politics; and he wants to relate political moderation to the ideological dead center in any given era.

The first task Brown handles largely by family resemblance, though he sometimes strains the parallels that connect his moderates, and the second task, the core of comparative biography, inevitably works better for some figures than others. Between the high art of statesmanship and the low art of majoritarian politics, Brown deems the former the true sign of moderate virtue. But it's the third task where he is least successful, and where his defense of moderation begins to fall apart. Brown wants to keep his moderates at the center along a univariate dimension, but the players and ideologies keep changing, and so he wobbles around as to whether his moderate center is the center of the electorate or of the party in factional disputes or of some intellectual spat.

Perhaps some of the trouble comes from Brown's vision of moderation. If the overall notion of political moderation can often feel like a moving target, its historical lineage, for Brown, is decidedly specific: It springs from Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke. In a 1738 essay, Bolingbroke brought forth the supple and beguiling notion of the "Patriot King" whose political party would transcend particular interests and rule on behalf of the entire nation, "united by one common interest, and animated by one common spirit." Though Bolingbroke accorded the word "moderate" no special significance, Brown takes this notion of a "Patriot King" as the germ of a politics that, he believes, has animated American public life from Adams to Obama.

The idea of governing for the sake of one nation has long been at the heart of the British Conservative Party, even down to the 1950s, when Rab Butler, who later became Harold Macmillan's deputy prime minister, pointedly contrasted the supposed national interest of the Conservatives with the class interest of the Labour Party. But Brown is not interested in Bolingbroke's British descendants so much as he is with his American ones. He quickly makes the Patriot King the avatar of an antiparty-ism that, from America's founding, has fervently committed itself to the constitutional tradition and looked askance at popular politics.

For Brown, John Adams was the Patriot King par excellence. As he situated himself between the Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians, he exemplified moderation. He was sharply critical of the unfettered belief in human reason, which he saw in Thomas Paine ("a star of disaster"), but he was also forever on guard against the ill effects of speculators' wealth, which distinguished him from Alexander Hamilton. Each, for Adams, threatened the balance and virtue that a civic community requires.

Brown persuasively links this vision of moderation to Lincoln, who, Brown argues, also sought a state that resisted predation "by either plutocracy or plantocracy." But after Lincoln's death, the moderate tradition that Brown depicts began to crack open. In America's complex polity after the Civil War, moderation on issues of race, capitalism, and the contest between Democrats and Republicans often pointed in different directions. Nor—as the retreat of Henry Adams into his study in the face of America's gilded excesses shows—did intellectual and political moderation necessarily go hand in hand. "As for traditions, constitution, principles, past pro-

A Buddha Sighting

When I was three
I saw baby Buddha
in an apple tree by the Hudson
When we grew up
Buddha climbed down from his apple tree
And took the New York Central Railroad
down the Hudson into Manhattan
to Grand Central Station
And took the Times Square Shuttle
and then another subway downtown
And got out at Wall Street
And disappeared forever
into the New York Stock Exchange
Although some say he has been sighted
Working in the bowels of the system
to enlighten everyone
as to how to live
like Siddhartha
without money

LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

fessions and all that," Adams wrote, lamenting the state of politics in his day, "the devil has put them back into his pocket."

In the sordid world of Gilded Age politics, Northern moderates worried more about political corruption than about the bloody "Redemption" of the South. Men like Charles Francis Adams Jr. and E.L. Godkin, the founding editor of this magazine, also displayed rather immoderate support for the National Guard as it put down labor unrest.

As one moves through Brown's book, one begins to realize that the various biographies offer few general lessons on how to choose among competing values, or how to distill the essence of the moderate tradition as a whole. The continuities among Brown's vital centrists began to chafe against their discontinuities. Brown's profiles also only spotlight distinguished moderates, thereby depicting their statesmanlike success, or in the case of Henry Adams, their noble failure, and as a result we miss the stories of moderate mediocrity. There's no chapter, say, on Thomas Dewey.

In considering some of the other moderates in American politics that Brown has left out, the problems with viewing moderation as a coherent tradition becomes all the clearer. Political machines in cities, often with friendly partners at the state capitol, long exchanged tangible benefits—turkeys at Thanksgiving, coal for immigrants' stoves, paving contracts to contributors—in return for support. While the political boss may not have been a Patriot King, he was all the same a moderate in that he could only wield power if every element in his coalition was held "in equilibrio."

Perhaps an even more damning example is the form of political moderation pursued by the Southern Democrats who dominated Congress for most of the 20th century and who, from the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 down through welfare reform in 1996, fundamentally shaped the American state. Like John Adams, the Southern Democrats feared wide-open politics and faraway bankers. But the end result was a sprawling national government that, directly and through the tax code, doles out benefits for the middle class, predominantly white, while relying on the states as intermediaries in stingy social programs aimed at the poor. Rather than pursuing the common interests of all Americans, their breed of political moderation meant racial subjugation, and Brown tellingly leaves them out of the story.

By the same token, Brown devotes great energy to the moderate sensibility, yet he has a much less precise sense of where and how, in the framers' complex system, moderation might matter politically. The ambivalence starts with his view of political parties: Brown decries the blind loyalty of grubby wirepullers, but he also looks askance at moderate Republicans who bolted for the Democrats in 1872 and 1884 and for Roosevelt's Bull Moose in 1912. Nor does Brown's vital centrism tell a consistent story about the presidency. The Adamses and George Cabot fretted about demagoguery, but Brown also cuts slack for Theodore Roosevelt, from whose rhetoric flows so many pathologies of a presidency that claims to speak alone for the people.

Above all, the central place where compromises happen in American politics—and where moderation is most essential—is in Congress, which Brown more or less ignores. John Quincy Adams's finest days of moderation came, in Brown's telling, while he served in the lowly House of Representatives, but after that, nobody Brown surveys had a congressional career that, on its own, amounted to anything. The moderate Republicans most important in Congress have been loners from the periphery, and they have proved thorns in the side of their own party. George W. Norris of Nebraska is the outstanding example, but Brown doesn't say anything about him.

Brown closes out his old moderate lineage with Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., a more restrained figure than perhaps the more obvious choice of Nelson Rockefeller. The decision makes a certain poignant sense. Lodge burst onto the scene in 1936 when he nabbed a place in the Senate, at the age of 34, from the roguish governor, James Michael Curley; then, in 1952, having masterminded Dwight Eisenhower's run for the presidency, he lost his seat to a very different Irishman, John F. Kennedy.

A firm Cold Warrior, Lodge served Ike at the United Nations, balanced Richard Nixon on the 1960 ticket, and twice headed to Saigon on diplomatic missions (shades of his grandfather's imperialist mission). When Lyndon Johnson met with the so-called wise men in March 1968 to discuss the war, Lodge was a member of the delegation. By the time of his death in 1985, almost 39 years after he'd won his last election, Lodge's moderate Republican Party had moved on. And so in Brown's telling the moderate dream (at least among Republicans) perished not when Rockefeller infamously met his maker in the arms of his assistant, Megan Marshack, but in Beverly, Massachusetts—overlooking the waters where ships in the China trade once set sail—after Lodge died following a long illness.

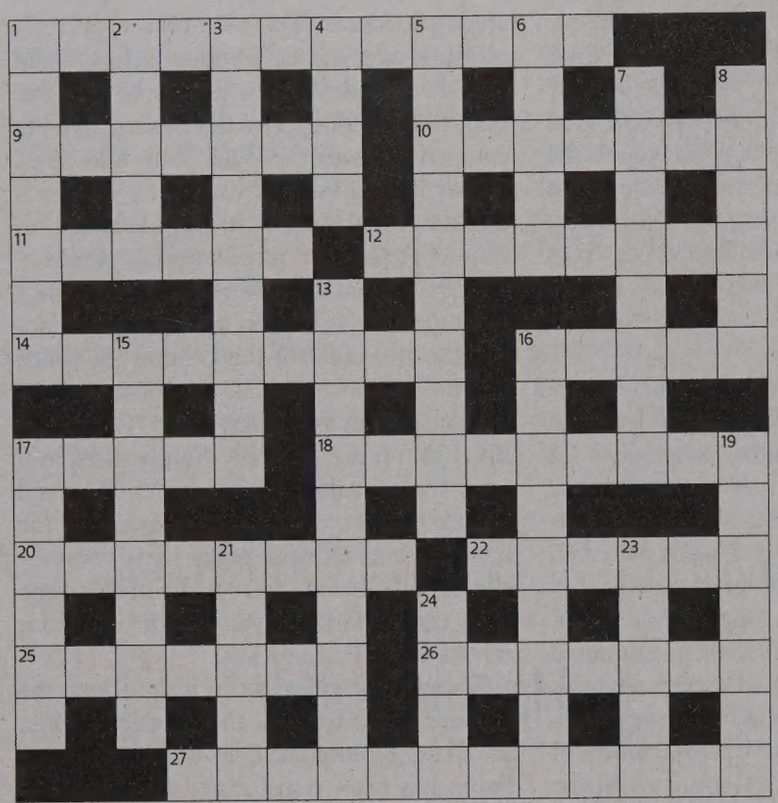
Brown does append a penultimate chapter on what happened to Lodge's party under the Bushes and a final one on the last three Democratic presidents. There's a certain perverse pleasure, after a couple hundred pages spent with Brown's brilliant grandees of moderation, to get a glimpse of the Bushes. Even in comparison with the Tafts, who also made money in the Ohio railroad boom, they look undistinguished: Prescott, who defended his view of Republican moderation as pure me-too-ism, proved to be every bit as much small and expedient as his son and grandsons. But it is the treatment of the Democrats, which concludes Brown's book, that poses deeper problems to his argument. Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton are the only Southerners in a book whose major subjects are Yankees, and Barack Obama, the most interesting of the bunch, gets a mere four pages, so we never really learn if Obama's great dream of bipartisan unity carried with it anything more than faint echoes of the Patriot King.

Brown also offers little insight into the broader story of how the moderate elite, now largely ensconced in the Democratic Party, has been transformed in recent decades. Even if its members often still attend Harvard and Yale, the party's moderates have become diversified, and with that diversity, they have absorbed the ideology of meritocracy to buttress their claim to power. The old qualms about mass politics have also returned to the fore, now encased in an economistic technocracy.

The current president's name appears nowhere in *Moderates*, as the book was written before his victory, but its heroes anticipated him. John Adams condemned "landjobbing" and Theodore Roosevelt those rich men "purely of the glorified huckster or the glorified pawnbroker type." Republicans may one day seek an identity beyond tax cuts and resource extraction and embrace something other than the Reagan mythos when they look for a usable past. But Republican moderates are, three senators' votes on health care notwithstanding, in short supply. Whether they fear a primary challenger or whether they don't much mind Trump is hardly the point: Events have borne out Brown's longer story on the decline of moderation, at least in the Republican Party. Republicans may direct their gaze to figures like Alexander Hamilton, Henry Clay, and William McKinley, but the party that long served as home to Brown's vital centrists is Donald Trump's now. The last threads that tied it to the moderate tradition have snapped. ■

Puzzle No. 3441

JOSHUA KOSMAN AND HENRI PICCIOTTO



ACROSS

1 Making progress or making a bust? (7,5)

9 Failure leads us into genuine rejection (7)

10 1,000 + 0 = 10 (just add water) (7)

11 Romeo heading to the back—and beginning to yawn, too (6)

12 Support and exceed in honesty? (8)

14 Careless fellow pursues Elgin, losing his marbles? (9)

16 Guard barring Sunday admission (5)

17 Ape cut fruit (5)

18 The same iodine reduction: one calorie (9)

20 Fool holding court? Thanks, that should fix just about anything (4,4)

22 Excellent puzzle piece in enigmatic rebus (6)

25 Rush around wildly and crash into a young attendant (7)

26 Packaging outspoken master of rhyme and rhythm (7)

27 El trains delivering the necessities for a future kind of travel? (12)

DOWN

1 Pitiful choice of letters to complete the word COI_ED (7)

2 Ransack fund-raiser if legislators accept that (5)

3 Hurtful hormone takes time to grow at first (9)

4 A delay held up fancy event (4)

5 Along with Beethoven's Fifth, dancing a minuet is something you can study (10)

6 Pests sustaining a traveler underground (5)

7 Teach lit differently—that's a kind of scholarship (8)

8 One out of seven miners eyes New Zealand inappropriately (6)

13 Half the world is into marijuana at this point (10)

15 Spilling a mug with cola can generate disease (8)

16 Period of atonement starts late, with the period we inhabit following (9)

17 Veteran foiled a person disregarding the odds (3,3)

19 Three parts of a hospital for a woman giving birth? (7)

21 Mark a carrier (formerly fashionable) (5)

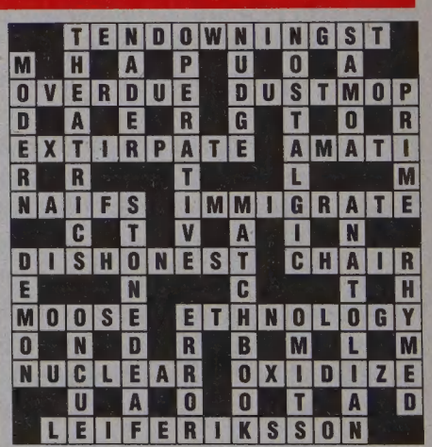
23 Ultimately, White Sox shortstop stole surgical boot (5)

24 Speaking to take advantage of sheep (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3440

ACROSS **1** 10-DOWN [PRIME location] + INGST (*Sting* anag.) **8** O(VERDU[n])E **9** anag. **11** E(X)TIR (rev.) + PATE **12** hidden **13** NA + IFS **15** IM + M + I GRATE **18** DISH + O + NEST **19** C + HAIR **21** MOOS + E **23** anag. **25** pun **26** OX + I + DI(Z)E **27** anag.

DOWN **1** THE + ATRICS (anag.) **2** hidden **3** O + PER + ATIVE (rev.) **4** NUD + GE (rev.) **5** anag. **6** initial letters **7** M(ODE)R. + N **10** PRIM + E **14** anag. **16** MATCH B.O. + OK **17** A + NATO + LIAN (rev.) **18** hidden **20** "rimed" **22** ON(CU)E **23** [t]ERROR **24** anag.



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Man Named Ed Accidentally Discovers How To "Reverse" Aging

72-year-old Edward Reed, or "Big Ed" as his friends call him, was in seriously bad shape.

He struggled with **constant fatigue, "brain fog," falling asleep during the day, unwanted weight gain, and lower overall energy.**

Ed's friends told him these were just the "normal signs of aging," but he knew there was something else.

In fact, there was only one doctor willing to help him.

But that's not the craziest part of the story…

Big Ed was able to address his health problems WITHOUT any prescriptions or expensive surgeries…

That's because Ed **accidentally** discovered a mix of natural ingredients that worked wonders on his health.

Using these ingredients, Ed's doctor developed an easy solution that helps naturally **boost energy, improve overall mood, reduce cravings, and lower fatigue.**

And the best part? This method can be done without ever leaving home,

and it takes less than a minute to do. And it doesn't just work for Ed. His wife has started using the same solution, and she is seeing similar results – **more energy, slimmer waist, and better sleep.** Of course, every individual is unique, so the exact results can and will vary from person to person.

Ed was kind enough to let us in on his incredible secret, and you can go to **www.NewEnergy51.com** to watch a video that explains the shocking method.

If you've been feeling the symptoms of aging – **lower energy, unwanted weight gain, or chronic fatigue** – then it is even more important that you watch this presentation here at **www.NewEnergy51.com**

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